

We Must Know Him Aright



*This is life eternal, that they
might know thee the only true
God, and Jesus Christ whom
thou hast sent. John 17:3*



*We Must
Know Him Aright*



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For further information write or call:

PATHWAY PUBLISHERS

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Clarksville, AR 72830 U.S.A.

479-754-3001

pathwaypub@yahoo.com

Christ's favorite theme
was the paternal
character and
abundant love of
God. This know-
ledge of God was
Christ's own gift
to men, and this
gift He has com-
mitted to His
people to be
communicated by
them to the
world. 6 T. 55.

Compilers Preface

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“ ‘God is love’ is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass. The lovely birds making the air vocal with their happy songs, the delicately tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air, the lofty trees of the forest with their rich foliage of living green—all testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God and to His desire to make His children happy.

“The word of God reveals His character. He Himself has declared His infinite love and pity. . . . The Lord passed before Moses, and proclaimed, ‘The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.’ Exodus 34:6,7. He is ‘slow to anger, and of great kindness,’ ‘because He delighteth in mercy.’ Jonah 4:2; Micah 7:18.

“God has bound our hearts to Him by unnumbered tokens in heaven and in earth. Through the things of nature, and the deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, He has sought to reveal Himself to us. Yet these but imperfectly represent His love. Though all these evidences have been given, the enemy of good blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear; they thought of Him as severe and unforgiving. Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice,—one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Creator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men, that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men.

Preface continued:

“The Son of God came from heaven to make manifest the Father. “His life was one of self-denial and thoughtful care for others. Every soul was precious in His eyes. While He ever bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with the tenderest regard to every member of the family of God. In all men He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save.

“Such is the character of Christ as revealed in His life. *This is the character of God.*” S.C. 10-12.

It is our desire and our prayer that whoever happens to read this book will grow more and more in love with the true God as found herein.

As we behold Him, we have the privilege of becoming like Him. “By beholding, we become changed.” But we have to behold Him *as He is* and not the way we think He is. Otherwise we will also be changed into that image.

There will never come a time when all our questions will be answered. “While God has given ample evidence for faith, He will never remove all excuse for unbelief. All who look for hooks to hang their doubts upon will find them. And those who refuse to accept and obey God’s word until every objection has been removed, and there is no longer an opportunity for doubt, will never come to the light.” G.C. 527.

B.J.T.

Key to Abbreviations of Book Titles

<i>Key</i>	<i>Book Title</i>
A.A.....	<i>Acts of the Apostles</i>
A.G.....	<i>God's Amazing Grace</i>
C.C.....	<i>Conflict and Courage</i>
C.D.....	<i>Counsels on Diet and Foods</i>
C.O.L.....	<i>Christ's Object Lessons</i>
C.T.....	<i>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students</i>
D.A.....	<i>The Desire of Ages</i>
Ed.....	<i>Education</i>
Ev.....	<i>Evangelism</i>
E.W.....	<i>Early Writings</i>
F.E.....	<i>Fundamentals of Christian Education</i>
G.C.B. 1897.....	<i>General Conference Bulletin, 1897</i>
Glad Tidings.....	<i>Glad Tidings, by E.J. Waggoner</i>
G.C.....	<i>The Great Controversy</i>
H.P.....	<i>In Heavenly Places</i>
Mar.....	<i>Maranatha</i>
M.B.....	<i>Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing</i>
M.H.....	<i>The Ministry of Healing</i>
M.L.....	<i>My life Today</i>
M.M.....	<i>Medical Ministry</i>
M.Y.P.....	<i>Messages to Young People</i>
N.I.V.....	<i>New International Version</i>
O.H.C.....	<i>Our High Calling</i>
P.K.....	<i>Prophets and Kings</i>
P.P.....	<i>Patriarchs and Prophets</i>
R.C.....	<i>Reflecting Christ</i>
R.H.....	<i>Review and Herald vol. 1–6</i>
S.C.....	<i>Steps to Christ</i>
S.D.....	<i>Sons and Daughters of God</i>
S.M.....	<i>Selected Messages vol. 1–3</i>

Continued:

<i>Key</i>	<i>Book Title</i>
B.C.....	<i>Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary</i>
S.R.....	<i>The Story of Redemption</i>
S.T.....	<i>The Signs of the Times, vols. 1-4</i>
T.....	<i>Testimonies for the Church, vols. 1-9</i>
Te.....	<i>Temperance</i>
T.D.G.....	<i>This Day With God</i>
T.M.K.....	<i>That I May Know Him</i>
U.L.....	<i>The Upward Look</i>
W.M.....	<i>Welfare Ministry</i>

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The knowledge of God
and of Jesus Christ
expressed in character is an
exaltation above everything
else that is esteemed on
earth or in heaven. It is
the very highest education.

It is the key that opens
the portals of the heavenly
city. This knowledge it is
God's purpose that all who
put on Christ shall posses.

M.H. 457.

We Must Know Him Aright

THE LORD, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. Ex. 34:6,7.

And this is life eternal, that they might *know* thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3.

Without a *knowledge* of God, humanity would be eternally lost.

P.K.693.

Then shall we know, if we follow on to *know* the Lord; His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. Hosea 6:3.

And how can we come into harmony with God, how shall we receive His likeness, unless we obtain a *knowledge of Him*? It is this knowledge that Christ came into the world to reveal unto us. S.T. 743.

A daily, earnest striving to *know God*, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, would bring power and efficiency to the soul. D.A. 355.

Only by love is love awakened. To *know God* is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. This work only one Being in all the universe could do. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it known. Upon the world's dark night the Sun of Righteousness must rise, "with healing in His wings." D.A. 22.

The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character. G.C. 678.

All that man needs to know or can know of God has been revealed in the life and character of His Son. S.T. 286.

Christ came to the earth to reveal to men the character of His Father, and His life was filled with deeds of divine tenderness and compassion. P.P. 469.

He [Christ] presented to men that which was exactly contrary to the representations of the enemy in regard to the character of God . . . F.E. 177.

Christ came to this world as the expression of the very heart and mind and nature and character of God. M.M. 19.

Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Phillip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? John 14:9.

I am “the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person.” You can *know* God by knowing Me. 2 R.H. 560.

Looking unto Jesus we obtain brighter and more distinct views of God, and by beholding we become changed. Goodness, love for our fellow men, becomes our natural instinct. We develop a character which is the counterpart of the divine character. Growing into His likeness, we enlarge our capacity for *knowing* God. C.O.L 355.

The Son of God came to this earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might learn to worship Him in spirit and in truth. C.T. 28.

Others, however, fail of a satisfactory understanding of the great problem of evil, from the fact that tradition and misinterpretation have obscured the teaching of the Bible concerning the character of God, the nature of His government, and the principles of His dealings with sin. G.C. 492.

It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. *His character is to be made known.* Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth. C.O.L. 415.

The knowledge of God as revealed in Christ is the knowledge that all who are saved *must* have. It is the knowledge that works transformation of character. *This knowledge, received, will recreate the soul in the image of God.* M.H. 425.

Those who wait for the Bridegroom's coming are to say to the people, "*Behold your God.*" The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. C.O.L. 415.

In order to endure the trial before them, they [the people of God who will live through the time of trouble and conflict] must understand the will of God as revealed in His word; *they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes,* and act in accordance with them. G.C. 593.

In order to be co-workers with God, in order to become like Him and to reveal His character, *we must know Him aright.* We must know Him as He reveals Himself.

A knowledge of God is the foundation of all true education and of all true service. . . . It is this *alone* that can make us like God in character.

This is the knowledge needed by all who are working for the uplifting of their fellow men. Transformation of character, purity of life, efficiency in service, adherence to correct principles, all depend upon a *right knowledge of God.* This knowledge is the essential preparation both for this life and for the life to come. M.H. 409.

As a personal being, God has revealed Himself in His Son. . . . God saw that a clearer revelation than nature was needed to portray both His personality and His character. He sent His Son into the world to manifest, so far as could be endured by human sight, the nature and the attributes of the invisible God. M.H. 418, 419.

Christ is a perfect representation of God . . . 7 B.C. 907.

Christ desired them [the disciples] to have a clearer, more distinct knowledge of God. . . . They received all the knowledge of God that they could bear, but the complete fulfillment of the promise that Christ would show them plainly of the Father was yet to come. Thus it is today. *Our knowledge of God is partial and imperfect.* M.H. 420.

For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and *increasing in the knowledge of God.* Col. 1:9,10.

To comprehend and enjoy God is the highest exercise of the powers of man. O.H.C. 61.

Only by knowing God here can we prepare to meet Him at His coming. . . . But many of those who profess to believe in Christ do not know God. They have only a surface religion. They do not love God; they do not study His character . . . Mar. 76.

It is growth in knowledge of the character of Christ that sanctifies the soul. . . . The beholding of Jesus becomes an ennobling, refining process to the actual Christian. . . . The perfection of Christ's character is the Christian's inspiration. When we see Him as He is, desire awakes to be like Him, and this elevates the whole man . . . R.C. 304.

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the *knowledge* of Him.

Eph. 1:17.

We have only one perfect photograph of God, and this is Jesus Christ. 7 B.C. 906.

In the atonement the character of God is revealed. G.C. 501.

The *knowledge* of God that works transformation of character is our great need. 8 T. 329.

For him [man] there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character he might be drawn back to God. D.A. 762

. . . When the great controversy shall be ended. . . . Then, the plan of redemption having been completed, the character of God is revealed to all created intelligences. D.A. 764.

The principles of kindness, mercy, and love, taught and exemplified by our Saviour, are a transcript of the will and character of God. G.C. 541.

All who in that evil day would fearlessly serve God according to the dictates of conscience, will NEED courage, firmness, and a *knowledge* of God and His word. . . . A.A. 431.

Now we are to go to the world and say to them, Behold your God. But before we can do that, it will be necessary that we ourselves *know Him*.

1897 G.C.B., 100.

To neglect salvation is to neglect the *knowledge* of the Father and of the Son whom God hath sent. T.M.K. 205.

The more man views his Saviour, and becomes acquainted with Him,

the more he will become assimilated to His image, and work the works of Christ. 4 T. 488.

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may *know* Him better. Eph. 1:17 N.I.V.



God's Character

FOR GOD so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His son . . . to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. John 3:16,17.

I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

Jer. 9:24.

If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee. Prov. 25:21,22.

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Mat. 5:44,45.

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. Heb. 13:8.

With whom [the Father] is no variableness neither shadow of turning. James 1:17.

For I am the LORD, I change not . . . Mal. 3:6.

When we study the divine character in the light of the cross we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice.

A.A. 333.

The Lord seeks to save, not to destroy. He delights in the rescue of sinners. P.K. 105.

As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Ez 33:11.

God's law is the transcript of His character. C.O.L. 305; IS.M. 225.

Thou shalt not kill. Ex. 20:13. **God destroys no man.** Everyone who is destroyed will have destroyed himself. C.O.L. 84.

The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government. . . . D.A. 22.

Earthly kingdoms rule by the ascendancy of physical power; but from Christ's kingdom every carnal weapon, every instrument of coercion, is banished. A.A. 12.

Christ, the outshining of the Father's glory, came to the world as its light. He came to represent God to men, and of Him it is written that He was anointed "with the Holy Ghost and with power," and "went about doing good." Acts 10:38; C.O.L. 416,417.

God destroys no one. S.T. 120.

. . . God was revealed in the character of His Son. M.H. 32.

The Son of God came to this earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might learn to worship Him in spirit and in truth. C.T. 28.

We have only one perfect photograph of God, and this is Jesus Christ. 7 B.C. 906.

God desires from all His creatures the service of love—homage that springs from an intelligent appreciation of His character. G.C. 493.

Those who wait for the bridegroom's coming are to say to the people, "Behold your God." The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. C.O.L. 415.

When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. C.O.L. 69.

With his [Satan] hosts of fallen beings he determined to urge the warfare most vigorously; for there stood in the world One who was a perfect representative of the Father, One whose character and practices refuted Satan's misrepresentation of God. Satan had charged upon God the attribute he himself possessed. Now in Christ he saw God revealed in His true character—a compassionate, merciful Father, not willing that any perish, but that all should come to Him in repentance, and have eternal life. 1 S.M. 254.

Jesus does not cast us off, even when we grieve Him: He clings to us still. O.H.C. 147.

The history of the great conflict between good and evil, from the time it first began in heaven to the final overthrow of rebellion and the total eradication of sin, is also a demonstration of God's unchanging love. P.P. 33.

But the Eternal One Himself proclaims His character: "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." Ex. 34:6,7;

G.C. 500.

In His [Christ's] life and character He . . . reveals the character of God . . . I S.M. 349.

The object of Christ in coming to earth was to reveal God to men, so that they might come to Him. *Christ and His Righteousness*, E.J.W. 15.



Misrepresentation of God

HE [SATAN] is a liar, and the father of it. John 8:44.

God desires from all His creatures the service of love—homage that springs from an *intelligent* appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced allegiance, and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service. G.C. 493.

The earth was dark through misapprehension of God. That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan's deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested *in contrast* to the character of Satan. This work only one Being in all the universe could do. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it known. Upon the world's dark night the Sun of Righteousness must rise, "with healing in His wings." D.A. 22; Mal. 4:2.

Compelling power is found *only* under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order. D.A. 759.

[Men] fail of a satisfactory understanding of the great problem of evil, from the fact that *tradition and misinterpretation have obscured the teaching of the Bible concerning the character of God*, the nature of His government, and the principles of His dealing with sin. G.C. 492.

Sin originated in self-seeking. Lucifer, the covering cherub, desired to be first in heaven. He sought to gain control of heavenly beings, to

draw them away from their Creator, and to win their homage to himself. Therefore he misrepresented God, attributing to Him the desire for self-exaltation. *With his own evil characteristics he sought to invest the loving Creator.* Thus he deceived angels. Thus he deceived men. He led them to doubt the word of God, and to distrust His goodness. Because God is a God of justice and terrible majesty, Satan caused them to look upon Him as severe and unforgiving. Thus he drew men to join him in rebellion against God, and the night of woe settled down upon the world. D.A. 21,22.

Satan has continued to present to men, as he presented to the angels, his *false representations* of Christ and of God. 7 B.C. 973.

It is Satan's constant effort to misrepresent the character of God. . . He causes them to *cherish false conceptions* of God so that they regard Him with fear and hate rather than with love. The cruelty inherent in his own character is attributed to the Creator . . . G.C. 569.

The Roman Catholic Church, uniting the forms of paganism and Christianity, and, like paganism, *misrepresenting the character of God*, has resorted to practices no less cruel and revolting. G.C. 569.

Rome had misrepresented the character of God and perverted His requirements . . . G.C. 281.

Multitudes have a *wrong conception* of God and His attributes, and are as truly serving a false god as were the servants of Baal. P.K. 177.

With intense interest he [Satan] watched the sacrifices offered by Adam and his sons. In these ceremonies he discerned a symbol of communion between earth and heaven. He set himself to intercept this communion. He *misrepresented God*, and misinterpreted the rites that pointed to the Saviour. Men were led to fear God as one who delighted in their destruction. D.A. 115.

The teachings of popes and priests had led men to look upon the character of God, and even of Christ, as stern, gloomy, and forbidding. G.C. 73.

When we consider in what *false colors Satan has painted the character of God*, can we wonder that our merciful Creator is feared, dreaded, and even hated? G.C. 536.

It is true that all suffering results from the transgression of God's law, but this truth had become perverted. Satan, the author of sin and all its

results, had led men to look upon disease and death as proceeding from God,—as punishment arbitrarily inflicted on account of sin. . . .

God had given a lesson designed to prevent this. The history of Job had shown that *suffering is inflicted by Satan*, and is overruled by God for purposes of mercy. D.A. 471.

With his hosts of fallen beings he determined to urge the warfare most vigorously; for there stood in the world One who was a perfect representative of the Father. One whose character and practices refuted *Satan's misrepresentation of God*. Satan had charged upon God the attributes he himself possessed. Now in Christ he saw God revealed in His true character—a compassionate, merciful Father, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Him in repentance, and have eternal life. I S.M. 254.

Thousands have a false conception of God and His attributes. They are as verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal. I B.C. 1105.

The very first thing that medical missionaries need to do is to gain a right conception of God, not a conception based on their own human judgment, but a conception based on a constant study of God's word and of the character and life of Christ. M.M. 91.

God does not take pleasure in punishing those who walk contrary to Him, giving a *false representation of His character*. But unless they repent, the time will come when they must reap the sure reward of their course of action. T.D.G. 40.

Through belief in *Satan's misrepresentation of God*, man's character and destiny were changed, but if men will believe in the word of God, they will be transformed in mind and character, and fitted for eternal life. I S.M. 346.

Satan is constantly at work, with intense energy and under a thousand disguises, to *misrepresent* the character and government of God. P.P. 78.

Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will. D.A. 762.

Satan has continued to present to men, as he presented to the angels, his *false representations of Christ and of God*, and he has won the world to his side. Even the professedly Christian churches have taken sides with the first great apostate. I S.M. 222.

The manifestation of God's love, His mercy and His goodness, and the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart to enlighten and renew it, place us, through faith, in so close connection with Christ that, having *a clear conception of His character*, we are able to discern the masterly deception of Satan. S.T. 744.745.



God's Law Protects

THE ANGEL of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. Ps. 34:7.

The happiness of man is found in obedience to the laws of God. In obedience to *God's law he is surrounded as with a hedge and kept from evil.* S.D. 66.

The ten holy precepts spoken by Christ upon Sinai's mount were the revelation of the character of God . . . That law of ten precepts of the greatest love that can be presented to man is the voice of God from heaven speaking to the soul in promise. . . . There is not a negative in that law, although it may appear thus. It is DO, and live. . . . The Lord has given *His holy commandments* to be *a wall of protection* around His created beings. S.D. 53.

So far from making arbitrary requirements, God's *law is given to men as a hedge*, a shield. Whoever accepts its principles is preserved from evil. Ed. 76.77.

The people of Israel were at this time loyal to God; and so long as they continued in obedience to His law, no power in earth or hell could prevail against them. But the curse which Balaam had not been permitted to pronounce against God's people, he finally succeeded in bringing upon them by seducing them into sin. When they transgressed God's commandments, then *they separated themselves* from Him, and they were left to feel the power of the destroyer.

Satan . . . seeks . . . to destroy all who venture upon his ground. *Only in humble reliance upon God, and obedience to all His commandments, can we be secure.* G.C. 529, 530.

The law reveals the attributes of God's character. D.A. 762.

His law is a transcript of His own character, and it is the standard of all character. C.O.L. 315.

God does not annul His laws. He does not work contrary to them.

Ed. 148.

He [Christ] invited men to learn of Him, for He was a living representation of the law of God. T.M.K. 207.

The arrows of the destroyer are about to be hurled against the faithful ones, and no earthly power can turn aside the shaft. But could our eyes be opened we could see angels of *God encircling the righteous, that no harm may come upon them.* O.H.C. 362.

Satan sets himself to destroy this commandment-keeping company. But God is their tower of defense. He will raise up for them a standard against the enemy. He will be to them "as an hiding place from the wind," and "as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." 4 R.H. 335.

The wicked one cannot break through the guard which God has stationed about His people. G.C. 517.

Sometimes men do pass the boundary line beyond God's protecting care, and then Satan exercises his power upon them, and God does not interpose. 3 B.C. 1140.

There is not a commandment of the law that is not for the good and happiness of man, both in this life and in the life to come. *In obedience to God's law, man is surrounded as with a hedge and kept from the evil.* He who breaks down this divinely erected barrier at one point has destroyed its power to protect him, for he has opened a way by which the enemy can enter to waste and ruin. M.B. 52.

It is God that shields His creatures and hedges them in from the power of the destroyer. But the Christian world have shown contempt for the law of Jehovah; and the Lord will do just what He has declared that He would—He will withdraw His blessings from the earth and remove His protecting care from those who are rebelling against His law and teaching and forcing others to do the same. Satan has control of all whom God does not especially guard. He [Satan] will favor and prosper some in order to further his own designs, and he will bring trouble upon others and lead men to believe that it is God who is afflicting them. G.C. 589.

I saw a covering that God was drawing over His people to protect them in the time of trouble; and every soul that was decided on the truth and was pure in heart was to be covered with the covering of the Almighty. E.W. 43.

Those who realize their weakness trust in a power higher than self. And while they look to God, Satan has no power against them. S.B.C. 1102.

Ensnared by his temptations they [Israel] had transgressed the law of God and thus separated from the Source of their strength, and had been left to become the prey of their heathen enemies. S.T. 468.

The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. S.C. 60.

. . . Shall we trample upon the law of God and say it is not binding? God might just as well have abolished Himself. In the law every specification is the character of the infinite God. I.B.C. 1104.

God cannot speak a falsehood. W.M. 307.

To this people [Israel] were committed the oracles of God. They were hedged about by the precepts of His law. . . . Obedience to these principles was to be their protection, for it would save them from destroying themselves by sinful practices. C.O.L. 287, 288.

Satan has an accurate knowledge of the sins that he has tempted God's people to commit, and he urges his accusations against them, declaring that by their sins they have forfeited divine protection, and claiming that he has the right to destroy them. P.K. 588.

. . . The law, as well as the gospel, is a mirror reflecting the true character of God. G.C. 465.

In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof is no death. Prov. 12:28.

Does the Law Destroy?

For *sin*, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it (the law) *slew me*. Was that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But *sin*, that it might appear *sin*, *working death in me* by that which is good: *The law is spiritual*. I am carnal, sold under sin. I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death? Rom. 7:11,13,14,23,24.

The sting of death is sin. 1 Cor. 15:56. (N.I.V.)

The wages of sin is death. Rom. 6:23.

He [Christ] was slain by the sin of the world. D.A. 722.

What caused the death of Christ—the *transgression of the law*. 6 T. 54.

God destroys no man. C.O.L. 84. It is sin that destroys. 2 T. 391.

[Upon the cross] Christ was suffering the death that was pronounced upon the transgressors of God's law. 5 B.C. 1103.

Compiler's conclusion: If the law is spiritual and an expression of God's character, and if God *does not* destroy, then we have to conclude that the law *cannot* destroy.

If it was sin which caused the death of Christ, and if He was man's substitute and died man's death (3 B.C. 1103), then we have to conclude that those who don't accept His sacrifice in their behalf will have to die that death themselves, and by the same means [by sin], or God would not be consistent, fair, or just.



God Permits

GOD IS A vigilant observer of the actions of the children of men. Nothing occurs in earth or heaven without the knowledge of the Creator. Nothing can happen without His permission. 4 R.H. 335.

The Father's presence encircled Christ, and nothing befell Him but that which infinite love permitted for the blessing of the world. Here was His source of comfort, and it is for us. He who is imbued with the Spirit of Christ abides in Christ. Whatever comes to him comes from the Saviour, who surrounds him with His presence. Nothing can touch him except by the Lord's permission. All our sufferings and sorrows, all our temptations and trials, all our sadness and griefs, all our persecutions and privations, in short, all things work together for our good. All experiences and circumstances are God's workmen whereby good is brought to us. M.H. 488,489.

God leads His children by a way that they know not . . . He permitted affliction to come upon Job, but He did not forsake him. He allowed the beloved John to be exiled to lonely Patmos, but the Son of God met him there . . . God permits trial to assail His people. . . P.P. 129.

If permitted, they [Satan and his host] can distract our minds, disorder and torment our bodies, destroy our possessions and our lives. Their only delight is in misery and destruction. G.C. 517.

God bears with divine patience with the perversity of the wicked; but He declares that he will visit their transgression with a *rod*. [What is this rod?] He will at last *permit* the destructive agencies of Satan to bear sway to destroy. B.C. 1171.

Satan is the destroyer. God cannot bless those who refuse to be

faithful stewards. All He can do is to *permit* Satan to accomplish his destroying work. We see calamities of every kind and in every degree coming upon the earth, and why? The Lord's restraining power is not exercised. The world has disregarded the word of God. They live as though there were no God. Like the inhabitants of the Noachic world, they refuse to have any thought of God. Wickedness prevails to an alarming extent, and the earth is ripe for the harvest. 6 T. 388, 389.

He [Satan] points scornfully at the mistakes of those who claim to be doing God service. They have been deceived by him, and he begs for *permission* to destroy them. T.D.G. 226.

This earth has almost reached the place where God will *permit* the destroyer to work his will upon it. 7 T. 141.

Angels are now restraining the winds of strife, that they may not blow until the world shall be warned of its coming doom; . . . and when God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture. Ed. 179, 180.

Satan claims the world, but there is a little company who withstand his devices, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Satan sets himself to destroy this commandment-keeping company. But God is their tower of defence. He will raise up for them a standard against the enemy. He will be to them "as an hiding place from the wind," and "as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." 4 R.H. 33.

He [Christ] allowed the evil spirits to destroy the herd of swine. . . Had not Christ restrained the demons, they would have plunged into the sea, not only the swine, but also their keepers and owners. The preservation of both the keepers and the owners was due alone to His power, mercifully exercised for their deliverance. Furthermore, this event was *permitted* to take place that the disciples might witness the cruel power of Satan upon both man and beast. G.C. 515.

He [Christ] permitted Lazarus to pass under the dominion of death . . . D.A. 528.

For their sake He permitted Lazarus to die. . . Had Christ been in the sickroom, Lazarus would not have died; for Satan would have had no power over him. Death could not have aimed his dart at Lazarus in the presence of the Life-giver. Therefore Christ remained away. He suffered the enemy to exercise his power, that He might drive him back, a conquered foe. D.A. 528.

Satan himself is the enemy who tempts man to sin, and then destroys him if he can; and when he has made sure of his victim, then he exults in the ruin he has wrought. If permitted, he would sweep the entire race into his net. Were it not for the interposition of divine power not one son or daughter of Adam would escape. G.C. 534.

He [Satan] claims them [God's people] as his prey and demands that they be given into his hands to destroy. G.C. 618.

Nothing can happen without His [God's] permission. 4 R.H. 335.

The angels never leave the tempted one a prey to the enemy who would destroy the souls of men if permitted to do so. As long as there is hope, until they resist the Holy Spirit to their eternal ruin, men are guarded by heavenly intelligences. O.H.C. 23.

While Jesus had been standing between God and guilty man, a restraint [God's protection] was upon the people; but when He stepped out from between man and the Father, the restraint was removed and Satan had entire control of the finally impenitent. E.W. 280.

[Angels] have thwarted the spoiler's purpose, and turned aside the stroke of the destroyer. M.L.T 367.

Satan was permitted to cut short the earthly life of God's messenger; but that life which "is hid with Christ in God," the destroyer could not reach. D.A. 224.

God suffered him [Miller] to fall under the power of Satan, the dominion of death, and hid him in the grave from those who were constantly drawing him from the truth. E.W. 258.

The Lord *permits* conflict, to prepare the soul for peace. G.C. 633.

Satan can exercise his authority only as God permits. D.A. 130.



City of Refuge

GOD IS OUR refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.
Ps. 46:1. The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. Prov. 18:10.

Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee . . . Ps. 91:9,10.

The cities of refuge appointed for God's ancient people were a symbol of the refuge provided in Christ. The same merciful Saviour who appointed those temporal cities of refuge, has by the shedding of His own blood provided for the transgressors of God's law a sure retreat, into which they may flee for safety *from the second death*. No power can take out of His hands the souls that go to Him for pardon.

P.P. 516.

He [Christ] has prepared for you and me an abiding dwelling place in Himself. He is our refuge. S.D. 191.

As a faithful shepherd He [Christ] gathers His flock under the shadow of the Almighty, in the strong and sure refuge. D.A. 680.

The Christian is walled in by the rich full promises of an infinite God. All who have made Christ their refuge will reflect His image, and they will be like Him, for they shall see Him as He is. T.M.K. 61.

The man who makes God his trust is barricaded by an impregnable wall. H.P. 176.

Those who were entitled to protection could receive it only on condition of remaining within the appointed refuge. Should one wander away beyond the prescribed limits, and be found by the avenger

of blood, his life would pay the penalty of his disregard of the Lord's provision. P.P. 516.

Satan is the destroyer. God cannot bless those who refuse to be faithful stewards. All He can do is to permit Satan to accomplish his destroying work. 6 T. 388, 389.

The sinner is exposed to eternal death, until he finds a hiding place in Christ; and as loitering and carelessness might rob the fugitive of his only chance for life, so delays and indifference may prove the ruin of the soul. Satan, the great adversary, is on the track of every transgressor of God's holy law, and he who is not sensible of his danger, and does not earnestly seek shelter in the eternal refuge, will fall a prey to the destroyer. P.P. 517.

Satan trembles and flees before the weakest soul who finds refuge in that mighty name. D.A. 131. He sees that his hellish plots have been powerless to destroy those who have put their trust in Jesus. G.C. 669.

. . . Christ is our refuge. Mar. 194.

Just as surely as we have a personal Saviour, we have also a personal adversary, cruel and cunning, who ever watches our steps, and plots to lead us astray. . . . I feel alarmed as I see so many. . . yielding to his power. . . . Did they but see their danger, they would flee to Christ, the sinner's refuge. S.D. 79.

We must understand our danger, or we shall not flee to the refuge.

C.O.L. 158.

The prisoner who at any time went outside the city of refuge was abandoned to the avenger of blood. Thus the people were taught to adhere to the methods which infinite wisdom appointed for their security. Even so, it is not enough that the sinner *believe* in Christ for the pardon of sin; he must, by faith and obedience, *abide* in Him. P.P. 517.

Satan is well aware that the weakest soul who abides in Christ is more than a match for the hosts of darkness, and that, should he reveal himself openly, he would be met and resisted. Therefore he seeks to draw away the soldiers of the cross from their strong fortification, while he lies in ambush with his forces, ready to destroy all who venture upon his ground. Only in humble reliance upon God, and obedience to all His commandments, can we be secure. G.C. 530.

They [men] venture upon the forbidden ground, and the mighty destroyer exercises his power upon them against their will. G.C. 558.

They separate themselves from God and from the watchcare of His angels; as the evil one presents his deceptions, they are without defense and fall an easy prey. G.C. 589.

He [Christ] is the refuge of His people. Under the shadow of His protection they can pass unharmed. Believe in Him and trust in Him. He will not give you up to the spoiler. H.P. 176.

He [Moses] knew God as a personal God, and, in meditating upon His character he grasped more and more fully the sense of His presence. He found refuge in the everlasting arms. M.H. 475.

... Israel ... had ever been the special objects of Satan's enmity; he was determined to cause their destruction. While they were obedient, he could do them no harm; therefore he had bent all his power and cunning to entice them into sin. Ensnared by his temptations, they had transgressed the law of God and had been left to become the prey of their enemies. P.K. 582.

Those who preach the last message of mercy should bear in mind that Christ is to be exalted as the sinner's refuge. Ev. 185.

We must now make Christ our refuge, or in the days before us our souls will be overwhelmed with darkness and despair. O.H.C. 362.

Let us see our Saviour as our refuge, as our shield on our right hand to defend us from the arrows of Satan. 2 S.M. 245.

What a privilege it is for you, now afflicted to find a refuge in Jesus.
U.L. 335.

He is the City of Refuge, to which every one pursued by the avenger of blood may flee. Glad Tidings 74.



Bible Language

LESSONS must be given to humanity in the language of humanity. ^{3 S.T. 373.} The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language. Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. The Bible must be given in the language of men. Everything that is human is imperfect. Different meanings are expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea. The Bible was given for practical purposes. ^{7 B.C. 945.}

The Lord speaks to human beings in imperfect speech, in order that the degenerate senses, the dull, earthly perception, of earthly beings may comprehend His words. Thus is shown God's condescension. He meets fallen human beings where they are. The Bible, perfect as it is in its simplicity, does not answer to the great ideas of God, for infinite ideas cannot be perfectly embodied in finite vehicles of thought. ^{7 B.C. 946.}

The stamps of minds are different. All do not understand expressions and statements alike. Some understand the statements of the Scriptures to suit their own particular minds and cases. Prepossessions, prejudices, and passions have a strong influence to darken the understanding and confuse the mind even in reading the words of Holy Writ.

The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen. Look at the different writers.

It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. ^{7 B.C. 945,946.}

The writers of the Bible had to express their ideas in human language. It was written by human men. These men were inspired of the Holy Spirit. Because of the imperfections of human understanding of language, or the perversity of the human mind, ingenious in evading truth, many read and understand the Bible to please themselves. ^{7 B.C. 945.}

For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. ^{Isa 55:8,9.}

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. ^{2 Peter 1:20.}

Compilers note: We can ask the question, "What is private interpretation as distinct from scriptural interpretation?" Private interpretation is that which emanates from the mind of man as his considered opinion of what the divine revelations are intended to say.

He arrives at certain conclusions according to the definitions of words already formed in his mind. His mind is a dictionary to which he makes reference whenever he reads a word. When he encounters a word not already stored in the computer of the mind, he then turns to a dictionary. Having obtained the meaning from there, he applies this word to the Scripture being read and develops an understanding of what the Scripture is supposed to say.

A good illustration to emphasize the point that Bible language is sometimes difficult for us to understand in our day and age, let us consider how language differs even with English speaking people. The statement "This car is hot!" could mean several different things to several different people.

If one member of the family says it to another while on a trip, he or she means that the heater should be turned down, the windows opened—the temperature inside is too warm for comfort.

If a mechanic says it to the car owner, it means that probably the radiator is boiling or dry and the engine badly overheated.

If a person standing next to a dark auto on a hot, sunny, summer day, leans back against it or touches it, then quickly moves away, he means that the surface temperature of the car is too warm for comfort—though the engine might be cold.

If a car salesman says it to a young client as he tries to clinch the sale, it means the car is selling like hotcakes being devoured at breakfast in a lumber camp on a cold morning.

But if a policeman says it, you know he means the car is stolen.

This shows that there are different meanings for the same word in our language and how important it is that we understand what is meant by what is being said.

I saw that God had especially guarded the Bible; yet when copies of it were few, learned men had in some instances changed the words, thinking that they were making it more plain, when in reality they were mystifying that which was plain, by causing it to lean to their established views, which were governed by tradition. But...the Word of God, as a whole, is a perfect chain, one portion linking into and explaining another. E.W. 220.

Examples:

Possible misconception: And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night *for ever and ever*.

Rev. 20:10.

Explanation: No eternally burning hell will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin. S.R. 430.

Possible misconception: A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord. Deut. 23:2.

If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Heb. 12:8 R.S.V

Explanation: Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. John 3:3.

Possible misconception: And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham. Gen. 22:1.

Explanation: What is temptation?—It is the means by which those who claim to be the children of God are tested and tried. We read that God tempted Abraham, that He tempted the children of Israel. This means that He permitted circumstances to occur to test their faith, and lead them to look to Him for help. I.B.C. 1094.

Possible misconception: The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Matt. 22:7. N.I.V.

Explanation: Their [the Jews] sufferings are often represented as a punishment visited upon them by the direct decree of God. It is thus that the great deceiver seeks to conceal his own work. By stubborn rejection of divine love and mercy, the Jews had caused the protection of God to be withdrawn from them, and Satan was permitted to rule them according to his will. The horrible cruelties enacted in the destruction of Jerusalem are a demonstration of Satan's vindictive power over those who yield to his control. G.C. 35.

Possible misconception: [God had declared concerning Pharaoh] “I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go. Ex. 4:21.

Explanation: It is not God that blinds the eyes of men or hardens their hearts. D.A. 322.

Possible misconception: Saul died because he was unfaithful to the Lord . . . So the Lord put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse. 1 Chron. 10:13,14 (N.I.V.).

Explanation: Saul took his own life by falling on his sword. P.P. 682.

Possible misconception: Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. Gen. 9:3.

Explanation: Everything had been destroyed upon which man could subsist, and therefore the Lord in their necessity gave Noah permission to eat of the *clean* animals which he had taken with him into the ark. But animal food was not the most healthful article of food for man. C.D. 373.

Possible misconception: I will *remember* My covenant, which is between me and you . . . Gen. 9:15.

Explanation: This does not imply that He would ever forget; but He speaks to us in *our own language*, that we may better understand Him.

Possible misconception: And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. [Gen. 11:5.](#)

Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. [Gen. 18:20,21.](#)

Explanation: God knew well the measure of Sodom's guilt; but He expressed Himself after the manner of men, that the justice of His dealings might be understood. [P.P. 139.](#)

Possible misconception: I [Jonah] went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me *for ever.* [Jonah 2:6.](#)

Explanation: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whales belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. [Matt. 12:40.](#)

Possible misconception: He [the slave who has his ear bored through with an awl] shall serve him *for ever.* [Ex. 21:6.](#) He shall be thy servant *for ever.* [Deut. 15:17.](#)

Explanation: Ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a Jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. [Lev. 25:10.](#)

And if he be not redeemed in these years, then he shall go out in the year of the Jubilee, both he, and his children with him. [Lev. 25:54.](#)

Possible misconception: Thus saith the Lord . . . Behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn. [Ex. 4:23.](#)

Explanation: All who failed to heed the Lord's directions would lose their firstborn by the hand of the destroyer. [P.P. 278.](#) Satan is the destroyer. [6 T. 388.](#)

Possible misconception: I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art luke-warm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. [Rev. 3:15,16.](#)

Explanation: Strange words coming from our loving Lord. I used to cringe at the thought of being "spewed out," by Christ. It seemed crude, even cruel. Then one day I noticed that the word *spewed* actually should be translated *vomit* (*Strong's Concordance*). This represents *involuntary expulsion*, not disgusted rejection.

You see, our lukewarm love nauseates Jesus. While this is not a pretty picture, at least we can find comfort in knowing that Christ does not want to expel us. It's just that our neutrality makes Him sick. Adventist Hot Potatoes 117.

Possible misconception: And they saw the God of Israel. Ex. 24:10.

Explanation: They did not behold the person of God, but only the inexpressible glory which surrounded Him. I S.P. 240.



God Withdraws

THEY shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the Lord; but they shall not find Him; He hath *withdrawn* Himself from them. Hosea 5:6.

I asked my accompanying angel the meaning of what I heard, and what the four angels were about to do. He said to me that it was God that *restrained* the powers, and that He gave His angels charge over things on the earth; that the four angels had power from God to hold the four winds, and that they were about to let them go; but while their hands were loosening, and the four winds were about to blow, the merciful eye of Jesus gazed on the remnant that were not sealed, and He raised His hands to the Father and pleaded with Him that He had spilled His blood for them. E.W. 38.

Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God's glory. To him as to no other created being was given a revelation of God's love. Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will. D.A. 761,762.

[Satan speaking] If we can keep souls deceived for a time, God's mercy will be *withdrawn*, and He will give them up to our full control.

T.M.K. 475.

God keeps a reckoning with the nations. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without His notice. Those who work evil toward their fellow men, saying, How doth God know? will one day be called upon to meet long-deferred vengeance. In this age a more than common contempt is shown to God. Men have reached a point in insolence and disobedience which shows that their cup of iniquity is almost full. Many have

well-nigh passed the boundary of mercy. Soon God will show that He is indeed the living God. He will say to the angels, ‘No longer combat Satan in his efforts to destroy. *Let him work out his malignity upon the children of disobedience; for the cup of their iniquity is full.* They have advanced from one degree of wickedness to another, adding daily to their lawlessness. I will no longer interfere to prevent the destroyer from doing his work.’”

This time is right upon us. The Spirit of God is being *withdrawn* from the earth. When the angel of mercy folds her wings and departs, Satan will do the evil deeds he has long wished to do. Storm and tempest, war and bloodshed,—in these things he delights, and thus he gathers in his harvest. 4 R.H. 335.

We cannot know how much we owe to Christ for the peace and protection which we enjoy. It is the restraining power of God that prevents mankind from passing fully under the control of Satan. The disobedient and unthankful have great reason for gratitude for God’s mercy and longsuffering in holding in check the cruel, malignant power of the evil one. But when men pass the limits of divine forbearance, that restraint is removed. God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression; but He leaves the rejectors of His mercy to themselves, to reap that which they have sown. Every ray of light rejected, every warning despised or unheeded, every passion indulged, every transgression of the law of God, is a seed sown which yields its unfailing harvest. The Spirit of God, persistently resisted, is at last *withdrawn* from the sinner, and then there is left no power to control the evil passions of the soul, and no protection from the malice and enmity of Satan. G.C. 36.

... It is not the work of good angels to control minds against the will of the individuals. If they yield to the enemy, and make no effort to resist him, then the angels of God can do but little more than hold in check the host of Satan, that they should not destroy, until further light be given to those in peril, to move them to arouse and look to heaven for help. M.Y.P. 53.

Destroying angels are taking up the work of vengeance; for the Spirit of God is gradually *withdrawing* from the world. 7 B.C. 983.

Terrible plagues are visiting our world, in famines, in floods, in calamities by sea and land, in earthquakes in divers places. And because of men's wickedness the Lord does not restrain the destroying power.

¹ R.H. 420.

How does the Lord harden the hearts of men? In the same way in which the heart of Pharaoh was hardened . . .

Every additional evidence of the power of God that the Egyptian monarch resisted, carried him on to a stronger and more persistent defiance of God . . . This case is a clear illustration of the sin against the Holy Ghost. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Gradually the Lord *withdrew* His Spirit. Removing His restraining power, he gave the king into the hands of the worst of all tyrants—self. C.C. 89.

. . . The spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last *withdrawn*. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. G.C. 614.

By stubborn rejection of divine love and mercy, the Jews had caused the protection of God to be *withdrawn* from them . . . G.C. 35.

It is God that shields His creatures and hedges them in from the power of the destroyer . . . The Lord will do just what He has declared that He would—He will *withdraw* His blessings from the earth and *remove His protecting care* from those who are rebelling against His law and teaching and forcing others to do the same. Satan has control of all whom God does not especially guard. He will favor and prosper some in order to further his own designs, and he will bring trouble upon others and lead men to believe that it is God who is afflicting them. G.C. 589.

When parents or rulers neglect the duty of punishing iniquity, God himself will take the case in hand. *His restraining power will be* in a measure *removed* from the agencies of evil, so that a train of circumstances will arise which will punish sin with sin. P.P. 728.

As the defenders of truth refuse to honor the Sunday-sabbath, some of them will be thrust into prison, some will be exiled, some will be treated as slaves. To human wisdom all this now seems impossible; but as the restraining Spirit of God shall be *withdrawn* from men,

and they shall be under the control of Satan, who hates the divine precepts, there will be strange developments. The heart can be very cruel when God's fear and love are removed. G.C. 608.

God bears long with the rebellion and apostasy of His subjects. Even when His mercy is despised and His love scorned and derided, He bears with men until the last resource for leading them to repentance is exhausted. But there are limits to his forbearance . . . Providence will no longer shield them from Satan's power. They will have sinned away their day of grace. 4 R.H. 335.

The Canaanites had filled up the measure of their iniquity, and the Lord would no longer bear with them. His protection being removed, they would be an easy prey. P.P. 390.

Were those who serve God removed from the earth, and His Spirit withdrawn from among men, this world would be left to desolation and destruction, the fruit of Satan's dominion. D.A. 306.

The long-suffering of God toward Jerusalem only confirmed the Jews in their stubborn impenitence. In their hatred and cruelty toward the disciples of Jesus they rejected the last offer of mercy. Then God withdrew His protection from them and removed His restraining power from Satan and his angels, and the nation was left to the control of the leader she had chosen. G.C. 28.

Men cannot with impunity reject the warning which God in mercy sends them. A message was sent from heaven to the world in Noah's day, and their salvation depended upon the manner in which they treated that message. Because they rejected the warning, the Spirit of God was withdrawn from the sinful race, and they perished in the waters of the Flood. G.C. 431.

No soul is ever finally deserted of God, given up to his own ways, so long as there is any hope of his salvation. "Man turns from God, not God from him." M.B. 93



Separation from God

YOUR INIQUITIES have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you. Isa. 59:2.

The transgression of that law caused a fearful separation between God and man. S.R. 51.

The Lord has not closed heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God. S.T. 217.

We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sins. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result . . . By choosing to sin, *men separate themselves* from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death. 6 B.C. 1110.

We want all to understand how the soul is destroyed. It is not that God sends out a decree that man shall not be saved. He does not throw a darkness before the eyes which cannot be penetrated. But man at first resists a motion of the Spirit of God, and, having once resisted, it is less difficult to do so the second time, less the third, and far less the fourth. Then comes the harvest to be reaped from the seed of unbelief and resistance. Oh what a harvest of sinful indulgences is preparing for the sickle! S.T. 120.

No soul is ever finally deserted of God, given up to his own ways, so long as there is any hope of his salvation. "Man turns from God, not God from him." Our heavenly Father follows us with appeals and warnings and assurances of compassion, until further opportunities and privileges would be wholly in vain. The responsibility rests with the sinner. By resisting the Spirit of God today, he prepares the way for

a second resistance of light when it comes with mightier power. Thus he passes on from one stage of resistance to another, until at last the light will fail to impress, and he will cease to respond in any measure to the Spirit of God. M.B. 93.

For ages the people of Israel had been separating themselves from God . . . S.T. 109, 110. God did not forsake them . . . they departed from Him, and separated themselves from His love. G.C. 316.

Unbelief always separates the soul from Christ. H.P. 276.

The sin which is indulged to the greatest extent, and which separates us from God and produces so many contagious spiritual disorders, is selfishness. H.P. 233.

Our danger, then, is in separating from God, and in mingling with the spirit and influence of the world. 2 R.H. 104.

With the issues of the conflict before Him, Christ's soul was filled with dread of separation from God. D.A. 687.

He who had been one with God, felt in His soul the awful separation that sin makes between God and men. This wrung from His lips the anguished cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" It was the burden of sin, the sense of its terrible enormity, of its separation of the soul from God—it was this that broke the heart of the Son of God. S.C. 13.

The cup which He [Christ] prayed should be removed from Him, that looked so bitter to His soul, was the cup of separation from God in consequence of the sin of the world. H.P. 89.

Sin so offensive to a holy God that it must separate the Father and His Son. P.P. 63.

The sense of the withdrawal of His Father's love pressed from His anguished soul these mournful words: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." A.G. 169.

The Father separated from His Son. D.A. 693.

Any sin in them [man] separates them from God. S.T. 662.

When we become absorbed in worldly things so that we have no thought for Him in whom our hope of eternal life is centered, *we separate ourselves* from Jesus and from the heavenly angels. These holy beings cannot remain where the Saviour's presence is not desired, and His absence is not marked. D.A. 83.

God is the fountain of life; and when one chooses the service of sin, he separates from God, and thus *cuts himself off from life.* D.A. 764.

Separated from the vine, the branch cannot live . . . Their separation from Christ involves a ruin as complete as that represented by the dead branch. D.A. 676.

Nothing can separate a *living Christian* from God. Mar. 108.

We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death. S.M. 235.



The Destroyer

THE WAGES of sin is death. Rom. 6:23. Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer. Ps. 17:4.

There are but two powers that control the minds of men—the power of God and the power of Satan. Christ is man's Creator and Redeemer; Satan is man's enemy and destroyer. Te. 276.

If He [Christ] lets go His hold of us for one moment, Satan stands ready to destroy. 6 B.C. 1078.

Satan, knowing that the empire he had usurped would in the end be wrested from him, determined to spare no pains to destroy as many as possible of the creatures whom God had created in His image. 7 B.C. 973.

The only safeguard against his power is found in the presence of Jesus. Before men and angels Satan has been revealed as man's enemy and destroyer. D.A. 341.

God bears long with the rebellion and apostasy of His subjects. Even when His mercy is despised, . . . He bears with men until the last resource for leading them to repentance is exhausted. But there are limits to His forbearance. From those who to the end continue in obstinate rebellion, He removes His protecting care. Providence will no longer shield them from Satan's power . . .

God keeps a reckoning with the nations. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without His notice. Those who work evil toward their fellow men, saying, How doth God know? will one day be called upon to meet long-deferred vengeance. In this age a more than common contempt is shown to God. Men have reached a point in insolence and disobedi-

ence which shows that their cup of iniquity is almost full. Many have well-nigh passed the boundary of mercy. Soon God will show that He is indeed the living God. He will say to the angels, "No longer combat Satan in his efforts to destroy. Let him work out his malignity upon the children of disobedience; for the cup of their iniquity is full. They have advanced from one degree of wickedness to another, adding daily to their lawlessness. I will no longer interfere to prevent the destroyer from doing his work." 4 R.H. 335.

Satan's agents never pause in their work of destruction. 9 T. 220.

Satan is the destroyer. God cannot bless those who refuse to be faithful stewards. All He can do is to permit Satan to accomplish his destroying work. We see calamities of every kind and in every degree coming upon the earth, and why? The Lord's restraining power is not exercised. 6 T. 388, 389.

Satan works through the elements also to garner his harvest of unprepared souls. He has studied the secrets of the laboratories of nature, and he uses all his power to control the elements as far as God allows. When he was suffered to afflict Job, how quickly flocks and herds, servants, houses, children, were swept away, one trouble succeeding another as in a moment. It is God that shields His creatures and hedges them in from the power of the destroyer. . . .

In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests . . . in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. G.C. 589, 590.

The power and malice of Satan and his host might justly alarm us were it not that we may find shelter and deliverance in the superior power of our Redeemer. We carefully secure our houses with bolts and locks to protect our property and our lives from evil men; but we seldom think of the evil angels who are constantly seeking access to us, and against whose attacks we have, in our own strength, no method of defense. If permitted, they can distract our minds, disorder and torment our bodies, destroy our possessions and our lives. Their only delight is

in misery and destruction. Fearful is the condition of those who resist the divine claims and yield to Satan's temptations, until God gives them up to the control of evil spirits. But those who follow Christ are ever safe under His watchcare. Angels that excel in strength are sent from heaven to protect them. The wicked one cannot break through the guard which God has stationed about His people. G.C. 517.

God is constantly at work for the good of His creatures. Satan is also constantly at work, but for evil. *The prince of the power of the air is the agent of destruction*, the one who causes suffering and misery. Times without number God has interposed to avert death, to keep men, women, and children in safety when Satan purposed a result wholly disastrous. 4 R.H. 335.

Sickness, suffering, and death are work of an antagonistic power. *Satan is the destroyer*; God is the restorer. M.H. 113.

Satan was permitted to cut short the earthly life of God's messenger [John the Baptist]; but that life which "is hid with Christ in God," the destroyer could not reach. D.A. 224.

He points scornfully at the mistakes of those who claim to be doing God service. They have been deceived by him, and he begs for permission to destroy them. T.D.G. 226.

He claims them [God's people] as his prey and demands that they be given into his hands to be destroyed. S.T. 468.

And in her [Babylon] was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of *all* that were slain upon the earth. Rev. 18:24.

Babylon must fall because of Israel's slain, just as the slain in all the earth have fallen because of Babylon. Jer. 51:49 N.I.V.

Those who profess to be the children of God do not place themselves under the guardianship of the heavenly angels, and as Satan is a destroyer, he works through those men and they make mistakes. 2 S.M. 52.

When they transgressed God's commandments, then they separated themselves from Him, and they were left to feel the power of the destroyer. G.C. 530. Satan himself is the enemy who tempts man to sin, and then destroys him if he can. G.C. 534.

Christ is the Restorer, *Satan is the destroyer*. U.L. 375.

From the days of Adam to our own time, our great enemy has been exercising his power to oppress and destroy. G.C. 510.

Satan is working to the utmost to make himself as God and to destroy all who oppose his power. 6 T. 14.

The wrath of Satan increases as his time grows short, and his work of deceit and destruction will reach its culmination in the time of trouble. G.C. 623.

Thus it was that Lucifer, “the light-bearer,” the sharer of God’s glory, the attendant of His throne, by transgression became Satan, “the adversary” of God and holy beings, and *the destroyer* of those whom Heaven had committed to his guidance and guardianship. P.P. 40.

Satan urges before God his accusations against them [the remnant church], declaring that they have by their sins forfeited the divine protection, and claiming the right to destroy them as transgressors.

5 T. 473.

Every sinful desire we cherish affords him a foothold. Every point in which we fail of meeting the divine standard is an open door by which he can enter to tempt and destroy us. D.A. 125.

The will must consent, faith must let go its hold upon Christ, before Satan can exercise his power upon us. D.A. 125.

The destruction of souls is the regular employment of Satan and his agents upon the earth. T.D.W.G. 171.

If the Lord did not continue His guardian care over us by day and night, Satan would exercise his power against us, and we should be consumed. The Lord has appointed His angels to shield His people, that the wicked one may not destroy us. 3 S.T. 347.

They [the angels] have thwarted the spoilers purpose, and turned aside the stroke of the destroyer. M.L.T. 367.

It is sin, not trial and suffering, which separates God from His people.

2 T. 390.

It was sin that caused death. P.P. 68. It is sin that is destroying souls.

2 T. 391.



They Destroy Themselves

O ISRAEL, thou hast destroyed thyself . . . for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Hosea 13:9, 14:1.

The people of Israel were at this time loyal to God; and so long as they continued in obedience to His law, no power in earth or hell could prevail against them. But the curse which Balaam had not been permitted to pronounce against God's people, he finally succeeded in bringing upon them by seducing them into sin. When they transgressed God's commandments, then they separated themselves from Him, and they were left to feel the power of the destroyer.

Satan . . . seeks . . . to destroy all who venture upon his ground. Only in humble reliance upon God, and obedience to all His commandments, can we be secure. G.C. 529, 530.

[Speaking of the Jewish babies being killed by Herod] This calamity the Jews had brought upon themselves . . . They had separated themselves from God by their sins, and had rejected the Holy Spirit, which was their only shield. D.A. 65.

Like Israel of old the wicked destroy themselves; they fall by their iniquity. G.C. 37.

God gives them existence for a time that they may develop their character and reveal their principles. This accomplished, they receive the results of their own choice. D.A. 764.

Satan is the destroyer. God cannot bless those who refuse to be faithful stewards. All He can do is permit Satan to accomplish his destroying work. 6 T. 388, 389.

[Speaking of the destruction of Satan and his followers at the end] This is not an act of arbitrary power on the part of God. The rejecters of His mercy reap that which they have sown. God is the fountain of life; and when one chooses the service of sin, He separates from God, and thus *cuts himself off* from life. D.A. 764.

Had Satan and his host then been left to reap the full result of their sin, they would have perished; but it would not have been apparent to heavenly beings that this was the *inevitable result of sin*. D.A. 764.

Of those who reject the truth He is saying, If you are destroyed, you are responsible. You would not come unto Me that you might have life. 4R.H. 238.

Every one who is destroyed will have destroyed himself. C.O.L. 84.

Could those whose lives have been spent in rebellion against God be suddenly transported to heaven and witness the high, the holy state of perfection that ever exists there, . . . could those whose hearts are filled with hatred of God, of truth and holiness, mingle with the heavenly throng and join their songs of praise? Could they endure the glory of God and the Lamb? No, no; years of probation were granted them, that they might form characters for heaven; but they have never . . . learned the language of heaven, and now it is too late. A life of rebellion against God has unfitted them for heaven. Its purity, holiness, and peace would be torture to them . . . They would long to flee from that holy place. They would welcome destruction, that they might be hidden from the face of Him who died to redeem them. The destiny of the wicked is fixed by their own choice. Their exclusion from heaven is voluntary with themselves, and just and merciful on the part of God. G.C. 542, 543.

They [men] venture upon the forbidden ground, and the mighty destroyer exercises his power upon them against their will. . . .

All who indulge in sinful traits of character, or willfully cherish a known sin, are inviting the temptations of Satan. They separate themselves from God and from the watchcare of His angels; as the evil one presents his deceptions, they are without defense and fall an easy prey. G.C. 558, 559.

The first step toward salvation is to respond to the drawing of the love of Christ. God sends message after message to men, entreating

them to repentance, that He may forgive, and write pardon against their names. . . . Shall His appeals go unheeded? Shall His overtures of mercy be ignored, and His love utterly rejected? Oh, then man will cut himself off from the medium through which he may gain life eternal

. . . I.S.M. 323, 324.

While God has given ample evidence for faith, He will never remove all excuse for unbelief. All who look for hooks to hang their doubts upon will find them. And those who refuse to accept and obey God's word until every objection has been removed, and there is no longer an opportunity for doubt, will never come to the light. G.C. 527.

Unbelief will ever find excuse for doubt, and will reason away the most positive proof. D.A. 386.

By refusing to keep His covenant, they [Israel] would cut themselves off from the life of God . . . C.O.L. 291.

The law of self-serving is the law of self-destruction. D.A. 624.

His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins. Prov. 5:22.

The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken . . . The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Ps. 9:15, 16.

Men fail of salvation through their own willful refusal of the gift of life. G.C. 262.

The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed. G.C. 656.

. . . if we will not accept His grace, what more can He do? We have destroyed ourselves by our determined rejection of His love. H.P. 346.

God did not forsake them . . . they departed from Him and separated themselves from His love. G.C. 316.

The truth, which should have been to them a savor of life unto life, became a savor of death unto death . . . Christ did not say to them [the Pharisees], "You can not enter the kingdom of heaven;" but He showed them that the obstacles that prevented them from entering were of their own creating. 4 R.H. 157.

His [Christ's] warnings, failing to arouse them to repentance, would seal their doom, and He wished them to see that they had brought ruin on themselves. He designed to show them the justice of God in the

withdrawal of their national privileges, which had already begun, and which would end, not only in the destruction of their temple and their city, but in the dispersion of the nation.

The hearers recognized the warning. But notwithstanding the sentence they themselves had pronounced, the priests and rulers were ready to fill out the picture by saying, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him". D.A. 597.

Evil shall slay the wicked . . . Ps. 34:21.

The Lord had never commanded them [Israel] to "go up and fight." It was not His purpose that they should gain the land by warfare but by strict obedience to His commands. P.P. 392.



Wrath of God

FOR AS many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. Gal.3:10

Disobedience to God's law is itself the curse; for "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Rom. 5:12. Sin has death wrapped up in it. Without sin death would be impossible, for "the sting of death is sin." 1Cor 15:56. "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." Glad Tidings 53.

"The law worketh wrath" because "all have sinned," and "the *wrath* of God cometh on the children of disobedience." How shall we become doers of the law, and thus escape *wrath*, or the curse? Glad Tidings 54.

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being *made a curse* for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.

Gal 3:13.

He, the Sin Bearer, endures the *wrath* of divine justice, and for thy sake *becomes sin itself*. D.A. 756.

That death is the curse is evident from the last part of verse 13 . . . Christ was made a curse for us, in that He hung upon a tree, that is, was crucified. But *sin is the cause of death*. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12. "The sting of death is sin." 1Cor. 15:56. So we have the substance of verse 10 thus, that those who do not continue in the things written in the law are dead. That is, disobedience is death. And this is what the Scripture says: "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Sin contains

death . . . Sin is the transgression of the law; the wages of sin is death. The curse, therefore, is the death that is carried about concealed even in the most attractive sin. *Glad Tidings* 56.

The curse . . . is disobedience . . . Death came by sin. Death is the curse that passed upon all men, simply because "all have sinned." *Glad Tidings* 56-57.

Could mortals have viewed the amazement and the sorrow of the angelic host as they watched in silent grief the Father *separating* His beams of light, love, and glory from the beloved Son of His bosom, they would better understand how offensive sin is in His sight. 2 T. 207.

It was the sense of His Father's *frown*, in consequence of sin, which rent His heart with such piercing agony and forced from His brow great drops of blood . . . 2 T. 204.

The sense of the *withdrawal* of His Father's love pressed from His anguished soul these mournful words: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." 2 T. 206.

It was the crushing weight of the sins of the world, and a sense of His Father's wrath. The Father's glory and sustaining presence had *left Him* . . . 2 T. 209.

Christ is dying! He is in despair! His Father's approving smile is *removed* . . . 2 T. 209.

The displeasure of the Father for sin, and its penalty, which is death, were all that He could realize through this amazing darkness. He was tempted to fear that sin was so offensive in the sight of His Father that He could not be reconciled to His Son. The fierce temptation that His own Father had forever left Him caused that piercing cry from the cross: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Christ felt much as sinners will feel when the vials of God's wrath shall be poured out upon them. 2 T. 210.

He endured the *hiding* of His Father's countenance . . . 2 T. 212.

The sins of the world were upon Him, also the sense of His Father's wrath as He suffered the penalty of the law transgressed. It was these that crushed His divine soul. It was the *hiding* of His Father's face—a sense that His own dear Father has forsaken Him—which brought despair. The *separation* that sin makes between God and man was fully realized and keenly felt by the innocent, suffering Man of Calvary. 2 T. 214.

Heavenly angels were not permitted to minister unto the anguished spirit of the Son of God. It was in this terrible hour of darkness, the face of His Father *hidden*, legions of evil angels enshrouding Him, the sins of the world upon Him, that the words were wrenched from His lips, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?” ^{2 T. 215.}

God suffered His *wrath* against transgression to fall on His beloved Son. ^{D.A. 743.}

He was realizing His Father’s *frown* . . . The *wrath* that would have fallen upon man, was now falling upon Christ. ^{S.B.C. 1124.}

The *wrath* of God against sin, *the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity*, filled the soul of His Son with consternation. . . . The *withdrawal* of the divine countenance from the Saviour in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt.

It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father’s *wrath* upon Him as man’s substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God. ^{D.A. 753.}

The *wrath* if God is not, as so often presented, a type of vindictive retaliation against sinners. Jesus suffered the *wrath* of God on the cross. His cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me” shows that *the wrath of God is separation from God*. In Romans 1, the apostle Paul shows that the *wrath* of God is revealed when God gives men up to follow the promptings of their own evil hearts. The close of probation is not an arbitrary act on the part of God. The final test brings men to the place where they make a settled decision to be independent of God. Reluctantly, God is forced to withdraw, and leave guilty men to the unrestrained power of wickedness in their own hearts. At this time Satan will have entire control over the impenitent, and they will have no protection from the strife of their own fierce passions. Crime, disease, bloodshed, lawlessness, hate, revenge, will burst forth as a torrent, and the most awful demonstration will be given of man completely separate from the restraining of divine mercy. This will be the time of trouble spoken of by Daniel the prophet—“a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time” ^{(Daniel 12:1). The Mystery}

Sinner Destroyed, How?

Sin and sinners will perish, root and branch. D.A. 763.

This is not an act of arbitrary power on the part of God. The rejecters of His mercy reap that which they have sown. God is the fountain of life; and when one chooses the service of sin, *he separates from God* and thus *cuts himself off from life*. He is “alienated from the life of God.” Christ says, “All they that hate Me love death.” Eph. 4:18 ; Pro. 8:36 ; D.A. 764.

God keeps a reckoning with the nations. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without His notice. Those who work evil toward their fellow men, saying, How doth God know? will one day be called upon to meet long-deferred vengeance. In this age a more than common contempt is shown to God. Men have reached a point in insolence and disobedience which shows that their cup of iniquity is almost full. Many have well-nigh passed the boundary of mercy. Soon God will show that He is indeed the living God. He will say to the angels, “No longer combat Satan in his efforts to destroy. *Let him work out his malignity upon the children of disobedience*; for the cup of their iniquity is full. They have advanced from one degree of wickedness to another, adding daily to their lawlessness. I will no longer interfere to prevent the destroyer from doing *his work*.” 4 R.H. 335.

God gives them existence for a time that they may develop their character and reveal their principles. This accomplished, they receive the results of their own choice. D.A. 764.

He gave them their own desire. Ps. 78:29.

If they [sinners] refuse the heavenly benefit, if they choose the pleasures and deceitfulness of sin, they can have their choice, and at the end receive their wages, *which is the wrath of God and eternal death*. I.S.T. 105. The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. 6:23.

We cannot know how much we owe to Christ for the peace and protection which we enjoy. It is the restraining power of God that prevents mankind from passing fully under the control of Satan. The disobedient and unthankful have great reason for gratitude for God’s mercy and long-suffering in holding in check the cruel, malignant power of the evil one. But when men pass the limits of divine

forbearance, that restraint is removed . . . The Spirit of God, persistently resisted, is at last *withdrawn* from the sinner, and then there is left no power to control the evil passions of the soul, and no protection from the malice and enmity of Satan. G.C. 36.

The destiny of the wicked is fixed by their own choice. Their exclusion from heaven is voluntary with themselves, and just and merciful on the part of God. G.C. 543.

If they refuse the heavenly benefit and choose the pleasures and deceitfulness of sin, they have their choice, and at the end receive their wages, which is the wrath of God and eternal death. 2 T. 210.

What is the Father's wrath?

His frown. 2 T. 204.

The withdrawal of His love. 2 T. 206.

The separation of His beams of light, love, and glory. 2 T. 207.

His glory and sustaining presence leaving. 2 T. 209.

The removing of His approving smile. 2 T. 209.

The hiding of His countenance. 2 T. 212.

The hiding of His face. 2 T. 214.

What took the life of Christ?

1. The sins of the world *and*

2. the sense of His Father's wrath as He suffers the penalty of the law transgressed. 2 T. 214.

1. The crushing weight of the sins of the world, *and*

2. a sense of His Father's wrath. 2 T. 209.

What will take the life of the sinner?

1. Sin *and*

2. the wrath of God. 2 T. 391; T.M. 139.

Sin is the transgression of the law. ^{1 John 3:4.} The wages of sin is death. ^{Rom. 6:23.} God is the fountain of life; and when one chooses the service of sin, he separates from God, and thus *cuts himself off from life*. ^{D.A. 764.} Every one who is destroyed will have destroyed himself. ^{C.O.L. 84.} They receive their wages, which is the *wrath* of God and eternal death. ^{2 T. 210.} I [God] will no longer interfere to prevent the destroyer from doing his work. ^{4 R.H. 335.}

Note: The word translated “wrath” is from a root allied to the Syriac and Arabic that means “to break off,” “to snap off.” The noun masculine, is “splinter,” a piece broken off. So the wrath of God . . . involves the idea of severing [separation] . . . The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary Vol. 1, page 827,828.



??? *Mysteries* ???

*W*HOM SHALL He teach knowledge? and whom shall He make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little. Isa. 28:9,10.

The Bible is its own interpreter, one passage explaining another.

4T 499.

The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light which streams from the cross of Calvary, and in connection with the wondrous, central truth of the Saviour's atonement. S.B.C. 1137.

That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col. 2:2,3.

The mystery of the cross explains all other mysteries. In the light that streams from Calvary the attributes of God which had filled us with fear and awe appear beautiful and attractive. Mercy, tenderness, and parental love are seen to blend with holiness, justice, and power. G.C. 652.

The revelation of God's love to men centers in the cross Here are infinite wisdom, infinite love, infinite justice, infinite mercy—"the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God."

Rom. 11:33. 8 T. 287.

There is one great central truth to be kept ever before the mind in the searching of the Scriptures—Christ and Him crucified. Every other truth is invested with influence and power corresponding to its relation to this theme. It is only in the light of the cross that we can discern the exalted character of the law of God. 6 B.C. 1084.

Those who study the Redeemer's wonderful sacrifice grow in grace and knowledge. 5 BC 1137.

It is sin that is destroying souls. 2 T. 391. It was sin that caused death.

P.P. 68

He [Christ] was slain by the sin of the world. D.A. 772.

By shedding the blood of the son of God, he [Satan] had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. D.A. 761.

I saw that God had especially guarded the Bible; YET when copies of it were few, learned men had in some instances changed the words, thinking that they were making it more plain, when in reality they were mystifying that which was plain, by causing it to lean to their established views, which were governed by tradition. But . . . the Word of God, as a whole, is a perfect chain, one portion linking into and explaining another. E.W. 220, 221.

Had Satan and his host then been left to reap the full result of their sin, they would have perished; but it would not have been apparent to heavenly beings that this was the inevitable result of sin. D.A. 764.

His own self bare our sins in His own body. 1 Peter 2:24.

For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Cor. 5:21.

The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Isa. 53:6.

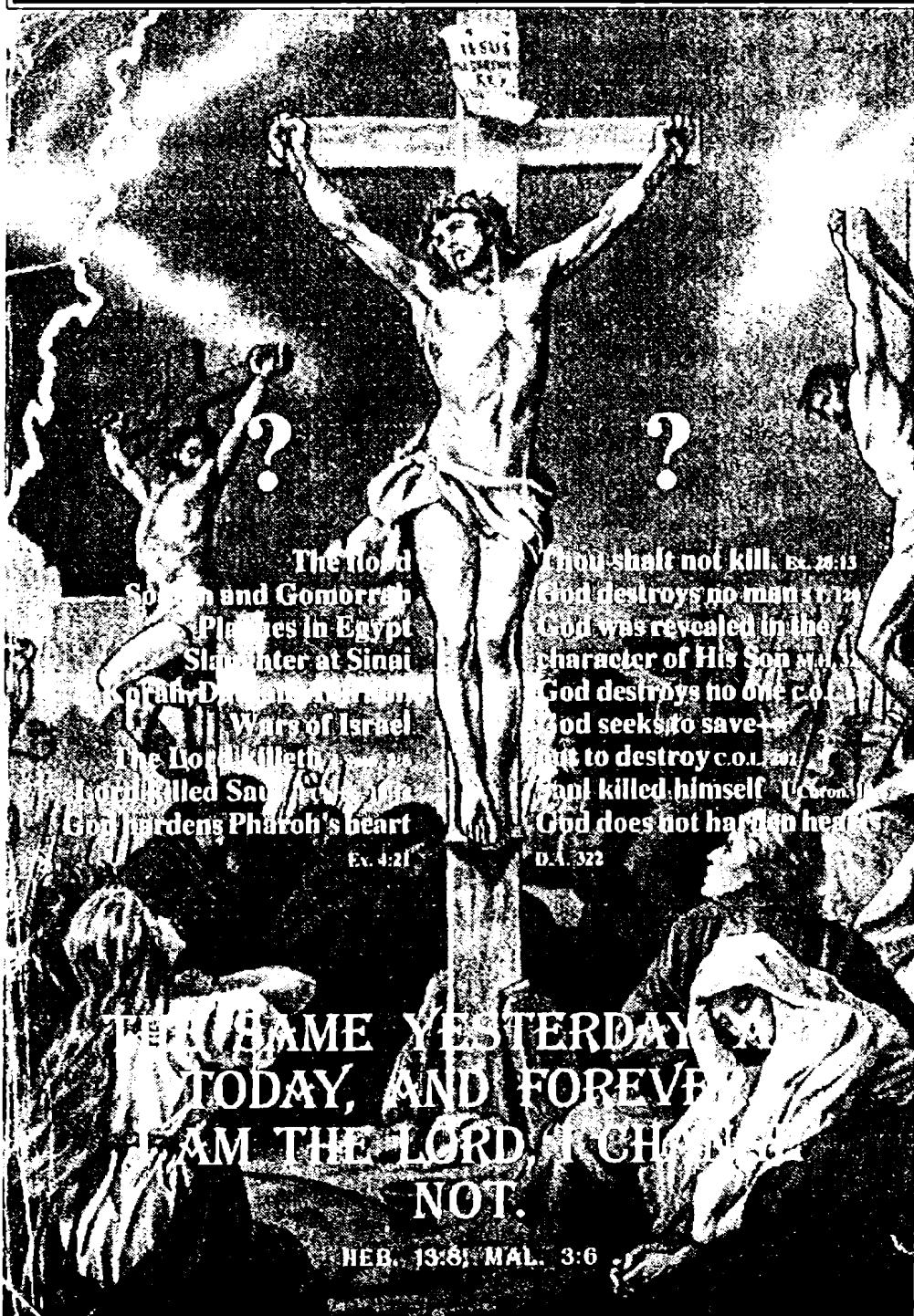
Sin so offensive to a holy God that it must separate the Father and His son. P.P. 63.

Christ felt much as sinners will feel when the vials of God's wrath shall be poured out upon them. 2 T. 210.



*The Mystery of the Cross
Explains Every Other Mystery*

G.C. 652



God Consumes Sin

BUT WHO may abide the day of His coming? who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver. Mal. 3:2,3.

To sin, wherever found, God is a consuming fire... The presence of God . . . consumes sin . . . M.B. 62.

. . . The furnace is to purify, but *not to consume*. P.P. 738.

The Lord is willing to help us, to strengthen and bless us; but we must pass through the refining process until all the impurities in our character are *burned* away. Every member of the church will be subjected to the furnace, not to consume, but to purify. S.T. 485.

He [Satan] may cause the furnace to be heated, but Jesus and angels will watch the trusting Christian, that *nothing may be consumed but the dross* [sin]. The fire kindled by **Satan** can have no power to destroy or hurt the true metal. I.T. 309. I saw that God is purifying and proving His people. He will refine them as gold, until the dross is consumed, and His image is reflected in them. I.T. 355.

To sin, wherever found, "our God is a consuming fire." Heb. 12:29. In all who submit to His power the Spirit of God will consume sin. D.A. 107.

. . . Earthliness must be consumed. G.C. 621.

The prophet Isaiah had declared that the Lord would cleanse their iniquities "by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." The word of the Lord to Israel was, "I will turn My hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin". D.A. 107.

His [Jacob's] transgression had been forgiven, and his sin purged; therefore he could endure the revelation of God's presence. But whenever men came before God while willfully cherishing evil, they

were destroyed. At the second advent of Christ the wicked shall be consumed "with the Spirit of His mouth," and destroyed "with the brightness of His coming." ^{2 Thes. 2:8.} The light of the glory of God, which imparts life to the righteous, will slay the wicked. ^{D.A. 108.}

Only the pure in heart could abide in His presence. ^{D.A. 108.}

God is too pure to behold iniquity. ^{2 T. 447.}

The people of Israel, because of their sinfulness, were forbidden to approach the mount when God was about to descend upon it to proclaim His law, lest they should be consumed by the burning glory of His presence. If such manifestations of His power marked the place chosen for the proclamation of God's law, how terrible must be His tribunal when He comes for the execution of these sacred statutes. How will those who have trampled upon His authority endure His glory in the great day of final retribution? ^{Mar. 40.}

At the coming of Christ the wicked are blotted from the face of the whole earth—consumed with the spirit of His mouth and destroyed by the brightness of His glory. ^{G.C. 657.}

By a life of rebellion, Satan and all who unite with him place themselves so out of harmony with God that His very presence is to them a consuming fire. The glory of Him who is love will destroy them. ^{D.A. 764.}

Every defect in the character, unless it is overcome by the help of God's Spirit, will become a sure means of destruction. ^{5 T. 573.}

It is no arbitrary decree on the part of God that excludes the wicked from heaven: they are shut out by their own unfitness for its companionship. The glory of God would be to them a consuming fire. They would welcome destruction, that they might be hidden from the face of Him who died to redeem them. ^{S.C. 18.}

Then shall they that obey not the gospel be consumed with the spirit of His mouth and be destroyed with the brightness of His coming. ^{2 Thess. 2:8.} Like Israel of old the wicked destroy themselves; they fall by their iniquity. By a life of sin, they have placed themselves so out of harmony with God, their natures have become so debased with evil, that the manifestation of His glory is to them a consuming fire. ^{G.C. 37.}

Before its destruction, the call is to be given from heaven, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive

not of her plagues.” Rev. 18:4. As in the days of Noah and Lot, there *must be a marked separation from SIN* and sinners. P.P. 167.

When the divine Presence was manifested upon Sinai, the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire . . . But when Christ shall come in glory with His holy angels the whole earth shall be ablaze with the terrible light of His presence. Mar. 40.

But amid the tempest of divine judgment the children of God will have no cause to fear. “The Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel.” The day that brings terror and destruction to the transgressors of God’s law, will bring to the obedient, “joy unspeakable, and full of glory.” Mar. 40.

He who is to the transgressors of His law a devouring fire [lion], is to His people a safe pavilion [lamb]. G.C. 654.

Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. Luke 20:18.

And what was it that destroyed the Jews? It was the rock which, had they built upon it, would have been their security. It was the goodness of God despised, the righteousness spurned, the mercy slighted. Men set themselves in opposition to God, and all that would have been their salvation was turned to their destruction. All that God ordained unto life they found to be unto death. D.A. 600.

You must have an experience for yourselves, which shall be founded in God. Then can you stand amid the perils of the last days, and be purified and not consumed by the fire of affliction through which all the saints must pass in order to have the impurities removed from their character preparatory to receiving the finishing touch of immortality. 2 T. 119.

But if men cling to sin, they become identified with it. Then the glory of God, which destroys sin, must destroy them. D.A. 107.

If you cling to self, refusing to yield your will to God, you are choosing death. To sin, wherever found, God is a consuming fire. If you choose sin, and refuse to separate from it, the presence of God, which consumes sin, must consume you. M.B. 62.

The coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, is very near.

In the day of His coming, the last great trumpet is heard, and there is a terrible shaking of earth and heaven. The whole earth, from the loftiest mountains to the deepest mines, will hear. Everything will be penetrated by fire. The atmosphere will be cleansed by fire. The fire having fulfilled its mission, the dead that have been laid away in the grave will come forth—some to the resurrection of life, to be caught up to meet their Lord in the air, and some to behold the coming of Him whom they have despised and whom they now recognize as the Judge of all the earth.

All the righteous are untouched by the flames. They walk through the fire, as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego walked in the midst of the furnace heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated. The Hebrew worthies could not be consumed, because of the form of the fourth, the Son of God, was with them. So in the day of the coming of the Lord, smoke and flame will be powerless to harm the righteous. Those who are united with the Lord will escape unscathed. Earthquake, hurricane, flame, and flood cannot injure those who are prepared to meet their Saviour in peace. U.L. 261.

The furnace fires are not to destroy but to refine, ennable, sanctify.

BT 128.



Our God is a Consuming Fire

Alonzo T. Jones

THE LORD is coming. He is coming with power and great glory. And “our God is a consuming fire.” Of the times and seasons, you have no need that I should speak; for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape. And though it is true that of the times and seasons you need not that I should speak, there is that connected with His coming, of which it is altogether essential to speak, and to think upon, all the time; and that is, the *effect* of His coming; for He comes “in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” And all these will be “punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.” 2 Thess. 1:8,9.

Again, it is written: “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.” 2 Thess. 2:8. So when He comes in His glory, it is a consuming glory, burning up all the wicked, and all that have any wickedness about them.

Yet again it is written: ‘Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. . . . And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity.’ Isa. 13:9,11. And “who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He

appeareth?" Mal. 3:2. That is the question. As He is a consuming fire: and as, when He comes, we shall see Him as He is, we shall have to meet Him as that consuming fire that He is, and there is no escaping it.

When He comes, He is no more of a respecter of persons than before He comes. "There is no respect of persons with God." Just as certainly as He is as He is; as certainly as He comes as He will; and as certainly as we shall see Him as He is, so certainly will we all—each one of us—be dealt with as we are. There is no change of character, there is no room for change in us in that day.

However, in that day, as in all other days, it is not upon men *themselves* that God's wrath is visited; but upon the *sins* of men, and upon *men* only as they are identified with their *sins*. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven," not against all ungodly men, not against all unrighteous men, but "against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." Rom. 1:18. And only as the man clings to his ungodliness, only as he holds down the truth in unrighteousness, shall it be that the wrath of God will be revealed from heaven against him: and even then not against *him* primarily, but *against the sin* to which he clings, and will not leave. And he has thus made his choice, clinging fast to his choice, he must take the consequences of his choice, when his choice shall have reached its ultimate. So it is written, and I read again, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth [who hold down, who press back the truth] in unrighteousness."

Continuing from where we read a moment ago, "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." "Believe not the truth." They knew of it; it was presented to them; their hearts told them, the Spirit of God told them, that it was the truth; their own consciences approved of it all: but they would not believe the truth;

they "had pleasure in unrighteousness," and held down, and pressed back, the truth in unrighteousness; and "*for this cause*" it is that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven, and strikes them.

Yet, as already stated, the wrath of God is not primarily against them, but against the thing which they love; against the thing which they cling to, and will not be separated from. And at last, in that great day when the judgment is set, and on the right and on the left are all the people who have ever lived, those on the left will depart "into everlasting fire . . ." The Lord has done His utmost that they might never see it. He gave His Son to save them, that they might never know it. It was not prepared for them. He does not desire that they should be lost; but they have to go there because there is the company which they have chosen; that is the place with which they have connected themselves, and from which they would not be separated. Therefore, He says, "depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire . . ."

Not prepared for *you*. God in that day,—the Lord Jesus Christ in that hour,—when that word shall be spoken, will be just as sorrowful as He was in the hour of the cross. He will be just as sorry that these have to go into that place, *which was not prepared for them*, as He was in the hour of the cross. It is not His pleasure that any should be there. They are there because of that sin to which they have inseparably joined themselves. And that being their irrevocable choice, they simply have the opportunity now of receiving indeed, and to the full, that which they have chosen. They always had their choice; they made their choice; they stuck to their choice: and when they receive the consequences of their choice, indeed there is no room for complaint. God has done all that He could do, but they would not have it.

So, though it is a fact that the Lord does not desire any of this to come upon any man, yet, as "God is a consuming fire," that is the way that He must come. Being a consuming fire, and coming as He is, He comes in flaming fire to visit upon *wickedness* that which is due; and whoever is joined with the wickedness has to go the same way.

"Taking vengeance on them that know not God." They had an opportunity to know God. Multitudes professed that they did know God, but in their works they denied Him. They had the form of godliness,—the profession,—but they denied the power thereof. You

know the words: ‘In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having *a form of godliness*, but *denying the power* thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, . . . reprobate concerning the faith.’” And destruction comes to them, not because they had no chance, but because they despised all the chances they had: not because they had no opportunity to know God, but because they rejected every opportunity that God ever gave them to find Him out, and know Him when He revealed Himself.

God is altogether clear; for Jesus said: “If any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him.” John 12:47,48.

Now let us find out that “one.” It is not Jesus Christ: He says it is not. It is not God; for the Lord Jesus said, “If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not.” That is not the “one.” But there is “one” that judges him, and I think we can find him out. Look again: “if any man hear my words.” That word is the word of God. It is the word of life of God, because it is the word of God. The word of life of God is eternal life, because eternal is the life of God. Then there is the word of eternal life. That word is spoken. All men hear it. “If any man hear my words, and believe not;” and “he that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words,”—that word being the word of life, when it comes to you, or to me, or to that other man, eternal life comes to you, or to me, or to that other man. In the “words of eternal life,” eternal life comes to him to whom the word comes. And when he rejects the word, he rejects eternal life. And *in choosing to reject eternal life, he chooses eternal death*. It is his own choice to reject eternal life; and in rejecting that, he chooses death. Then when that death comes to him which he has chosen—who brought him to it?

Who counted him worthy of death? Who judged him? Who

sentenced him to death?—Only *himself*. Nobody else is concerned in it at all. God did all that He could: He set eternal life before him; He surrounded him with every possible inducement, and every persuasion, to receive it; He made it attractive to him; it was adorned, decorated, made as beautiful as God's truth itself could be made, and his own heart approved of it; the Spirit of God said to him, "That is the right thing, that is the truth:" But he "had pleasure in unrighteousness." He rejected the word, and in rejecting the word of eternal life, he rejected eternal life; and in that he chose eternal death. And when he receives eternal death, it is only what he chose. He himself is the only one who counted himself worthy of it.

When Paul and Barnabas were in Antioch, and the Jews contradicted and blasphemed against those things which were spoken by Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles, these men of God waxed bold, and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Acts 13:46. Mark; it was not said, *We judge you unworthy of eternal life.* No; *you "judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life."* Every man who meets destruction passes upon himself the judgment of that destruction.

All the Scripture is founded upon this thought,—that *it is not against the person, but against the thing to which the person has fastened himself, that the wrath of God comes.* Then as the Lord executes vengeance primarily *only against sin*, as His wrath is only against ungodliness and unrighteousness, and He had done everything He could to get the people to separate from sin, then in that burning day when He comes, and reveals Himself to the world, and the world sees Him as He is, it will still be only sin against which He will execute vengeance.

What more could God do than He did do to take away sin? He gave His only begotten Son; Christ gave Himself, that whosoever would believe on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. He pledges Himself to every soul who will believe, that he shall not perish. The word does not read, as too often it is misread, God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him *might* not perish, but have everlasting life. No such thing. The next

verse has the “*might*” in it: “God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.” It *may* be, too. When God gave His Son, in that gift He established the eternal possibility that every soul in this world might be saved. But there is where the “*might*” is. There is where the “*maybe*” is. Because, whether any one is saved, depends upon what he chooses. The Lord will not save us in spite of ourselves. He has made it possible, in the gift of Christ, for every one of us to be saved. It depends upon us whether we choose the salvation that He has given; whether we will take the cross, and adopt the means, that will make it certain to us.

But when one has chosen Christ, and believes in Him, there is no “*maybe*” about it any more. It *shall* be. *Then* the verse comes in where the *shall* is, and reads: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him *should* not [not, “*might not*”] perish, but have everlasting life.” Believing in Jesus Christ takes away all the “*maybe*” that there ever was in it, and makes it an eternal *shall be*. So, then, to every soul who believes in Jesus, God says, I pledge Myself that you “*shall not* perish.” To every soul in this world, wicked as he may be, God’s message is that He has made the provision, He has established the thing, and so firmly fixed it that just as certainly as a soul believes in Jesus Christ, that soul “*shall not perish*.” That is a good offer. It is infinitely fair, and infinitely generous. It is as fair and generous as is God.

Destruction of sin is the only way of salvation. His name shall be called “Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.” So when I accept His offer, as certainly as I believe in Jesus I shall not perish. And in that, I accept the provision that I will *let sin go*. I agree that I am willing to be separated from the sin, and that I will *separate from sin*. Listen: “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him that the body of sin might be destroyed.” Then the object of the cross of Christ is the destruction of sin. Never miss that thought. Hold fast to it forever: the cross of Jesus Christ—the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the object of it—is the destruction of sin. Thank the Lord, that object will be accomplished. Now let us read the whole verse: “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be

destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” Rom. 6:6. Not only is there destruction of sin, but freedom from the service of sin. ‘For sin shall not have dominion over you.’” verse 14. Let us follow that thought briefly right through the chapter. There is in it a whole world of Christian victory and joy.

“For he that is dead is freed from sin.” He who is crucified, he who has accepted the death of Jesus Christ, and is crucified with Him, he it is that is freed from sin.

“Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.” But where does He live? Does He live in sin?—He never did. Then as certainly as we live with Him, we live with Him free from sin.

“Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him.” It could not hold the dominion which it *had*. It had the dominion, because He gave Himself up in surrender to the dominion of death; but death could not hold Him, because He was separated from sin. Neither can death hold anybody else; even though it has dominion, it can not *hold* the man who is free from sin.

“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you.”

There the apostle says that sin shall not have dominion over you. Let not sin therefore reign in your flesh, in your members. Then coming down a little farther: “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” The next verse reads: “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then *made free from sin*, ye became the servants of righteousness.” The cross of Christ gives not only freedom from sin, but makes men servants of righteousness. The next verse tells us that the service

of righteousness is “*unto holiness*;” the end of holiness is everlasting life; and without holiness “no man shall see the Lord.”

Then it is perfectly plain, as plain as A B C, that the only true preparation for the coming of the Lord is separation from sin. It makes no difference how much we talk about the coming of the Lord; nor how much we preach the signs of the times; nor how much we prepare for it otherwise, though we sell all we have, and give to the poor,—if we are not separating from sin, making it our constant consideration to be absolutely separated from sin, and to be servants of righteousness unto holiness, we are not making preparation for the coming of the Lord at all: our profession is all a fraud. We may not be working it *as* a fraud; but we are inflicting upon ourselves a fraud. It may be that we are deceiving ourselves by it; but that makes no difference: if our constant consideration is not entire separation from sin, our profession is a fraud.

The profession of being an Adventist, of being a Seventh-day Adventist, looking for the coming of the Lord, telling people that the coming of the Lord is near, watching the signs of the times,—all this is right, absolutely and forever right. But, though I have all this, and have not that one thing,—the sole ambition to be completely separated from sin, and from the service of sin,—my profession of the *Adventist* faith is a fraud; for if I am not separated from sin, *I* cannot meet the Lord at all in peace. Therefore if my sole ambition is not separation from sin, and from the service of it, I am not preparing at all to meet the Lord.

Then the question for every one of us here today, and for Seventh-day Adventists of all people, is, Are you preparing to meet the Lord, whom, *without holiness*, no man shall see? I am going to ask you more than that: Are you *ready* to meet the Lord? Of the times and seasons, you have no need that I speak to you. It is not necessary for me to stand here, and talk about how near the coming of the Lord is. The signs are multiplying upon the earth. You are Adventists. You know all that; but it *is* proper for me, now and forever, to stand here and ask, Are you separated from sin? And *being* separated from sin, are you ready to meet the Lord? Because our God is a consuming fire, and there is no use trying to get away from that. He is nothing else. You need not coddle yourself with the

notion that God is anything else than a consuming fire. Just make up your mind to that. He says that that is just what he is; and the sooner you and I make up our minds that God is a consuming fire, the better.

Christ is coming; we are talking about it; it will be for us. He is coming in flaming fire, He comes as a consuming fire; but I want to know what is the use of talking about His coming unless we are ready to meet Him in this consuming fire? It is all deception for any man to pass along carelessly when that is the eternal truth.

Do you not remember that the word not only says that we shall see Him, but see Him *as He is*? that is, we shall see Him as a consuming fire,—*and I am glad of it*. Thank the Lord! Here is a description of Him when John saw Him *as He is*,—saw Him as we shall see Him,—and what of it? Just a few points: “His eyes were as a *flame of fire*.” “His feet like unto fine brass, as if they *burned in a furnace*;” and “His countenance was as the *sun shineth in his strength*.” His raiment was “white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them,” “as white as the light”—the whiteness of piercing, consuming brightness. That is He. And that is He as He is when He comes; and without holiness no man shall see Him. Without separation from sin, no man shall stand.

Then the question with you and with me today, and all the time is, How shall we be so separated from sin that we may meet Him in flaming fire? How, how, how?

Look at yourself and your record, and I will look at myself and my record. We will look at the evil traits that are in us, at the struggles we have made, and the longing we have had to overcome these besetments, and to separate ourselves from all the evil, that we might indeed be ready. Where is there time to get ourselves ready? In the short time that intervenes between now and that day,—*is there time*? and if so, when shall be that time when you and I shall have that thing so accomplished, shall have so separated ourselves from sin that we shall be ready to meet Him in flaming fire? The answer is, Never. That time will never, never come.

What, then, shall we do? *Do not misunderstand*. I did not say that the time never would come when we could *be separated* from sin. I said, Look at yourself, and I will look at myself, and we will see what we are, how full of evil traits, and what little progress we have made in

this work of overcoming, and ask the question, When will the time ever come when *you* and *I* shall have so separated *ourselves* from sin that we can meet Him in flaming fire? It is *that time* which I say will never, never come.

But, bless the Lord! there is time to *be separated* from sin. No time will ever come when *we* can do this work *ourselves*; but the time *is now*, JUST NOW, to *be separated* from sin. The time to be separated from sin is right now, and that *now* is *all the time*; for "now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." *Only God* can separate us from sin; He will do it, and He will do it just now. Bless His name!

Yet, what every one must understand is this: **the only way that God does, or can, separate anybody from sin is by the very consuming fire of His presence.** The only way, therefore, in which you and I can ever be so separated from sin as to meet God as He is, in the flaming fire that He is, in that great day, is *to meet Him TODAY* as He is, in the consuming fire that He is. The only way that we can be prepared to meet Him at His coming in that great day is to meet Him in His coming *today*. For there is a coming to men *now*, as really as to the world in that great day. "I will not leave you comfortless: *I will COME TO YOU.*" John 14:18. But do not forget that whether He comes to you or to me *now*, or whether He comes to other people in that great day, He comes only as a consuming fire.

Listen: "If any man hear My voice, and open the door,"—what does He say?—"I will come in to him." Good. Thank the Lord! And "He is a consuming fire;" and when He comes in to you, that coming will consume all the sin in you, so that when He comes in the clouds of heaven in flaming fire, you can meet Him in joy in the consuming fire that He is.

Then do you hear His voice? "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, *and open the door*, I WILL COME IN TO HIM." Do you hear His voice? Then swing open wide the door, and keep it everlastingly open. Bid Him welcome, in the consuming fire that He is: and that flaming fire of His presence will consume sin in all your being, and so will thoroughly cleanse and prepare you to meet Him in flaming fire in that great day.

When I meet Him *today* "in a flaming fire," when I welcome Him

today “a consuming fire” *in me*, shall I be afraid to meet Him in flaming fire in *that day*— No; I shall be accustomed to it; and knowing what a blessed thing it is to become familiar with meeting Him as “a consuming fire,” knowing what a blessing that has brought to me *today*, I shall be delighted to meet Him on *that other day*, when He shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire. “Our God is a consuming fire.” Bless the Lord!

“Who may abide the day of His coming? Who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a *refiner’s FIRE*.” Good. Then when I meet Him *now*, in the consuming fire that He is, I meet Him in a fire that is refining, that purifies. “And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.” *That* is separation from sin; that is purification from sin. And that sets us where we offer an offering unto the Lord in righteousness: we become the servants of righteousness unto holiness, that we may meet the Lord. So, then, bless the Lord that He is a consuming fire,—that He is as a refiner’s fire.

Look again at the expression in Revelation: “His eyes were as a flame of fire.” In that day His eyes will rest upon each one of us, and He will look clear through us. When His eyes are as a flame of fire, and those eyes in that great day rest upon every one of us, and look clear through us, what will that look do for every one who is wrapped up, body and soul, in sin?—It will consume the sin, and the sinner with it; because he would not be separated from the sin. And *today*, just now, those eyes are the same that they will be in *that day*. Today His eyes are as a flame of fire; and “all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” Very good, then. As all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do, whether we *will have* to do with Him or not, why not accept the fact, choose to have it so, and on our part open up everything to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do? And having opened up the life thus to Him, to the flaming fire of the glory of His shining eyes, what will that do?—Those eyes of living flame will look clear through us, and will consume away all the sin, and all the dross; and will refine us so that He shall see in us the image of Himself.

It is written that we are to serve the Lord “as of *sincerity*.” Sincere is genuine; it is true; it is as strained honey. Originally, it is honey strained, and strained again, over and over, until, holding up the honey to the light, it is found to be *sine-cera*,—“without wax,” no trace of cera to be seen floating in it. That is what He says you and I are to be as certainly as we are Christians. God cleanses us in the blood of Christ, and holds us up in the light of the Lord, and the world can see only the light. And so, “ye are the light of the world.”

Here, again, is the word of the Lord: “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me.” Ps. 139:23,24. That is the word given to us for today and for all time. Another word goes right along with it: “O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, . . . and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.” Another translation has it: “Thou has compassed me all around; and holdest thine hand over me.” verses 1-5. That is a fact. He has compassed us all around, and His hand is over us. Whether we *accept* it or not is another matter; but that is the fact with every man in all this wide world. That is how it is that all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Then when it is a fact that He has searched us, and known us, and does search out and know us all the time, why not accept it as a fact, and have the benefit of it? Why not present to Him the word, “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts?” What for?—“And see if there be any wicked way in me.” O, that sets me before His face; for His glorious eyes of light to look upon me, and to shine through me, as the fire, searching out if there be any wicked way in me! And having searched it out, and being a consuming fire, He consumes it all away, and leads me in the way everlasting.

So, then, the sure way to escape the flaming fire of *that great day* is to welcome that flaming fire *this day*. Therefore, I say again, Let it never escape from your thought that “our God is a consuming fire;” and that the sure way to escape from that consuming fire in that great day *when there will be no chance to change*, and no time to choose, is to choose

today the blessed change that is wrought, by welcoming freely, gladly, into the life, our God, who is a consuming fire.

I remember the word that was spoken to Moses. As Moses had come nearer and nearer to God, he said at last: "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory." That is exactly what appears in the coming great day that is at hand: He comes "in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." His glory covers the heavens in that day, and the earth is filled with His praise. In that day He is "wrapped in a blaze of boundless glory," "and every eye shall see Him." But who shall endure it? That is the question; and the answer is, Only those who have prayed and now pray, that Christian prayer, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory."

When Moses prayed that blessed Christian prayer, the Lord said: "There is a place by Me, . . . and I will put thee in a cleft of the rock," "I will make all My goodness pass before thee." "And it shall come to pass, *while My glory passeth by*," I "will cover thee with My hand." And I will take away My hand, and you shall see Me. Ex. 33:21-23. So, though every man *should* dread the terror of the consuming glory of the Lord in that great day, there is *today a place by Him*. So we are to bid all souls; and from Him I bid *you*, today, Come, and stand in this place by Him, in the very presence of the flaming glory. Do not be afraid. Moses was not able to bear the fullness of that consuming glory that day; but the Lord, in His love, *covered him with His hand*, and protected him from the effects of that glory, which he was unable to bear.

The great trouble in that great day is that the people are *not able to bear the glory*. The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, the chief men and the captains, and every bondman, and every freeman flee to the rocks and mountains to hide themselves, and say to the rocks and mountains "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" The blazing glory of God will shine upon the earth, and these people can not bear it.

But today do not be afraid. He says: "There is a place by Me;" there is a place "in a cleft of the rock," and "I will put thee in a cleft of the rock," and I "will cover thee with My hand," so that you can bear the blaze, and the purifying power, of My glory. And that

consuming fire of My presence shall consume away all the sin. I “will cover thee with My hand,”—I will protect you even from that weakness which, in you, makes you unable to bear the fullness of My glory. And when He takes away His hand in that great day, those who have dwelt by His side, and been purified by living in this consuming fire until they are made white and tried, can look upon His unveiled face. In the full brightness of His glory, we shall look upon Him, and see Him as He is.

And that is where we are *now* to look. With open face we can look, even now, into His face. For, in the flesh of Jesus Christ, God has veiled the annihilating power of the glory of His face; for, having shined into our hearts, He gives the light of the knowledge of the glory of God *in the face of Jesus Christ*. In looking into the face of Jesus Christ, we see the face of God, and “we all, with open face beholding as in a glass *the glory* of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory, to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Then let every soul welcome the glorious message that God sends to the world, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost;” welcome that blessed Spirit that works this change by which we are changed from glory to glory, and made ready to meet Him in that great day of glory; and welcome not only the Holy Spirit, but covet earnestly the best gifts, which the Holy Spirit brings when He comes. Desire spiritual gifts; for these are to bring us to perfection in Christ Jesus. Only in this way shall we be made perfect in Christ Jesus; and in Christ be made ready to meet Him as He is.

God is a consuming fire; and I am glad of it. Our God is coming; and I am glad of it. He is coming in flaming fire; and I am glad of it. He is coming in *all* His glory; and I am glad of it. I am sorry that there will be anybody upon whom He will have to take vengeance; but I am glad that the day is coming when all sin will be swept away by our God, who is a consuming fire.

Come, brethren. Are you ready? Are you ready to meet Him *in that day*? If not, He says to you today, “There is a place by Me.” Come *today*, and stand in this place by Me. I will reveal to you all My glory; “I will make all My goodness pass before thee.” And where there is any defect in you that cannot just now bear the deeply

consuming fire of this glory, I “will cover thee with My hand” until it is all over: so that I may separate you from all sin, and save you *in that day of glory.*

O, then, welcome Him who is a consuming fire! Dwell in His presence. Open up the life. Recognize the fact that He is a consuming fire—that He is never anything else. Then rejoice in that today. Dwell in that consuming fire today. And when *that great day* breaks upon the earth, in *all* His glory, we shall also rejoice in *that day*. Then we shall stand and say “Lo this is our God.” But what! with the mountains hurling through the air; every island fleeing out of its place; the earth coming up from beneath; the heavens departing as a scroll, with a noise that is more than deafening; and flaming fire all around, His face as the sun, His eyes as a flame of fire,—in all this shall we rejoice?—Yes, bless the Lord! We shall rejoice, because “this is our God.” We have seen Him before; we have lived with Him; we have welcomed His consuming presence; we have welcomed the living flame of which His eyes are as a flaming fire, that they should pierce us through, and search out any wicked way in us. We know what blessing and joy were brought into our lives when His consuming glory purified us from sin and from sinning, and made us the servants of righteousness unto holiness. And knowing what blessedness that was, we exclaim, in the fullness of perfect joy “Lo, this is our God” indeed. We see Him now, more fully than before. That means more blessing still. ‘Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.’”

Isa. 25:9.



Problems and Solutions

Problem: King Saul's Death

SAUL DIED because he was unfaithful to the Lord; he did not keep the word of the Lord and even consulted a medium for guidance, and did not inquire of the Lord. So the Lord put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse. 1 Chron. 10:13,14 (N.I.V.)

Solution:

By his own stubbornness and rebellion he had cut himself off from God. P.P. 676. So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. 1 Chron. 10:4. Saul took his own life by falling upon his sword. P.P. 682.

Problem: Hardening of the Heart

[God had declared concerning Pharaoh] I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go. Ex. 4:21.

Solution:

How was it in the case of Pharaoh? The statement in Holy Writ is that God hardened his heart . . . This case is placed on record for our benefit. . . . ***God destroys no one.*** The sinner destroys himself by his own impenitence. S.T. 119, 120.

How does the Lord harden the hearts of men? In the same way in which the heart of Pharaoh was hardened . . .

Every additional evidence of the power of God that the Egyptian monarch resisted, carried him on to a stronger and more persistent defiance of God . . . This case is a clear illustration of the sin against the Holy Ghost. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gradually the Lord withdrew His Spirit. Removing His restraining power, He gave the king into the hands of the worst of all tyrants—self. C.C. 89.

There was no exercise of supernatural power to harden the heart of the king. God gave to Pharaoh the most striking evidence of divine power; but the monarch stubbornly refused to heed the light. . . . As he continued to venture on in his own course, going from one degree of stubbornness to another, his heart became more and more hardened, until he was called to look upon the cold, dead faces of the firstborn. P.P. 268.

It is not God that puts the blinder before the eyes of men or makes their hearts hard; it is the light which God sends to His people, to correct their errors, to lead them in safe paths, but which they refuse to accept,—it is this that blinds their minds and hardens their hearts.

2 R.H. 433.

God speaks to men through His servants, giving cautions and warnings, and rebuking sin. He gives to each an opportunity to correct his errors before they become fixed in the character; but if one refuses to be corrected, divine power does not interpose to counteract the tendency of his own action. He finds it more easy to repeat the same course. He is hardening the heart against the influence of the Holy Spirit. P.P. 268.

We must come with a humble and teachable spirit to obtain knowledge from the great I AM. Otherwise, evil angels will so blind our minds and harden our hearts that we shall not be impressed by the truth. G.C. 599.

It is not God that blinds the eyes of men or hardens their hearts. D.A. 322. Every rejection of light hardens the heart and darkens the understanding. 1 B.C. 1100.

Problem: Destruction of Jerusalem

The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Mat. 22:7 (N.I.V.).

The Jewish people sealed their rejection of God's mercy. The result was foretold by Christ in the parable. The King "sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city." The judgment pronounced came upon the Jews in the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the nation. C.O.L. 308,309.

Angels of God were sent to do the work of destruction, so that one stone was not left upon another that was not thrown down. S.B.C. 1099.

What destroyed the Jews? It was the rock which had they built upon it, would have been their security. It was the goodness of God despised.

D.A. 600.

Solutions:

. . . Israel had spurned the divine protection, and now she had no defense. G.C. 29.

Their sufferings are often represented as a punishment visited upon them by the direct decree of God. It is thus that the great deceiver seeks to conceal his own work. By stubborn rejection of divine love and mercy, the Jews had caused the protection of God to be withdrawn from them, and Satan was permitted to rule them according to his will. The horrible cruelties enacted in the destruction of Jerusalem are a demonstration of Satan's vindictive power over those who yield to his control. G.C. 35.

O that thou, a nation favored above every other, hadst known the time of thy visitation, and the things that belong unto thy peace! I have stayed the angel of justice, I have called thee to repentance, but in vain.If thou art destroyed, thou alone are responsible. "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." G.C. 22.

The blind obstinacy of the Jewish leaders, and the detestable crimes perpetrated within the besieged city, excited the horror and indignation of the Romans, and Titus at last decided to take the temple by storm.

G.C. 33.

. . . In the siege and slaughter that followed, more than a million of the people perished . . . G.C. 35.

The longsuffering of God toward Jerusalem only confirmed the Jews in their stubborn impenitence. In their hatred and cruelty toward the disciples of Jesus they rejected the last offer of mercy. Then God

withdrew His protection from them and removed His restraining power from Satan and his angels, and the nation was left to the control of the leader she had chosen. G.C. 28.

Christ saw the retribution that was to come upon the Jews as a result of their course of action,—their rebellion against God, and their hatred of the Roman power, which they were compelled to obey. Had the Jews been loyal to God, the armies of heaven would have shielded them from their adversaries. They brought their ruin upon themselves. 4 R.H. 237.

The doom foretold came upon the Jewish nation. Their own fierce passions, uncontrolled, wrought their ruin. In their blind rage they destroyed one another. C.O.L. 295.

Problem: World's End

The Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity . . . Isa. 26:21.

Fire comes down from God out of heaven. The earth is broken up. The weapons concealed in its depths are drawn forth. Devouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. The day has come that shall burn as an oven. The elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein are burned up. Mal. 4:1;

1 Pet. 3:10; G.C. 672.

The Saviour's prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfillment, of which that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow. In the fate of the chosen city we may behold the doom of a world that has rejected God's mercy and trampled upon His law. G.C. 36.

Christ saw in Jerusalem a symbol of the world hardened in unbelief and rebellion, and hastening on to meet the retributive judgments of God. G.C. 22.

Solution:

Their [the Jews] sufferings are often represented as a punishment visited upon them by the direct decree of God. It is thus that the great

deceiver seeks to conceal his own work. By stubborn rejection of divine love and mercy, the Jews had caused the protection of God to be withdrawn from them, and Satan was permitted to rule them according to his will. The horrible cruelties enacted in the destruction of Jerusalem are a demonstration of Satan's vindictive power over those who yield to his control. G.C. 35.

The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old. G.C. 614.

[Speaking of the end] *Like Israel of old* the wicked destroy themselves; they fall by their iniquity. G.C. 37.

Problem: Satan's Fate

I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire . . . Thou shalt be a terror and never shalt thou be any more.

Ez. 28:16,19.

Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore will I bring forth a fire *from the midst of thee*, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. Ez. 28:18.

And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Rev. 12:7–9 (N.I.V.)

Solution:

Had Satan and his host then been left to reap the full result of their

sin, they would have perished; but it would not have been apparent to heavenly beings that this was the inevitable *result of sin.* D.A. 764.

... Through death He [Christ] might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. *Heb. 2:14.*

The casting down of Satan as an accuser of the brethren in heaven was *accomplished by the great work of Christ in giving up His life.*

7 B.C. 973.

God will vindicate His law and deliver His people. Satan and all who have joined him in rebellion will be cut off. Sin and sinners will perish, root and branch —Satan the root, and his followers the branches. The word will be fulfilled to the prince of evil, ‘Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God, . . . I will destroy thee, O covering cherub. . .’

This is not an act of arbitrary power on the part of God. The rejecters of His mercy reap that which they have sown. God is the fountain of life; and when one chooses the service of sin, he separates from God, and thus cuts himself off from life. . . . By a life of rebellion, Satan and all who unite with him place themselves so out of harmony with God that His very presence is to them a consuming fire. D.A. 763, 764.

Problem: Strong Delusions from God

For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. *2 Thes. 2:11.*

Solution:

What stronger delusion can beguile the mind than the pretense that you are building on the right foundation and that God accepts your works, when in reality you are working out many things according to worldly policy and are sinning against Jehovah? Oh, it is a great deception, a fascinating delusion, that takes possession of minds when men who have once known the truth, mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof. . . . *8 T. 249.*

Evil men will give themselves over to believe strong delusions, that they may be damned. These men will put on the garments of sincerity and deceive, if possible, the very elect. *4 T. 595.*

Looking down to the last days, the same Infinite Power declares, concerning those who “received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved”: “For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” As they reject the teachings of His word, God withdraws His Spirit and leaves them to the deceptions which they love. G.C. 431.

They rejected the truth, and the enemy has had power to bring strong delusions upon them that they should believe a lie. 1 T. 73.

We must follow the directions given through the spirit of prophecy. We must love and obey the truth for this time. This will save us from accepting strong delusions. 8T. 298.

Satan works with his crooked, deceiving power, and through strong delusions he catches all who do not abide in the truth, who have turned away their ears from the truth and have turned unto fables. T.M. 365.

Problem: God’s Judgments

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight saith the Lord. Jer. 9:23,24.

God cannot forbear much longer. Already His judgments are beginning to fall on some places, and soon His signal displeasure will be felt in other places. 9 T. 96.

Solution:

Terrible plagues are visiting our world, in famines, in floods, in calamities by sea and land, in earthquakes in divers places. And because of men’s wickedness the Lord does not restrain the destroying power.

3 R.H. 420.

Satan works through the elements also to garner his harvest of unprepared souls. He has studied the secrets of the laboratories of nature, and he uses all his powers to control the elements as far as God

allows. . . . It is God that shields His creatures and hedges them in from the power of the destroyer. . . .

While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he [Satan] will bring disease and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempest, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. G.C. 589, 590.

I was shown that the judgments of God would not come directly out from the Lord upon them. . . 14 MR3

Problem: God Tempts

And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham.

Gen. 22:1.

Solution:

What is temptation?—It is the means by which those who claim to be the children of God are tested and tried. We read that God tempted Abraham, that He tempted the children of Israel. This means that He permitted circumstances to occur to test their faith, and lead them to look to Him for help. God permits temptation to come to His people today, that they may realize that He is their helper. If they draw nigh to Him when they are tempted, He strengthens them to meet the temptation. But if they yield to the enemy, neglecting to place themselves close to their Almighty Helper, they are overcome. They separate themselves from God. They do not give evidence that they walk in God's way.

1 B.C. 1094.

Temptation is enticement to sin, and this does not proceed from God, but from Satan and from the evil of our own hearts. M.B. 116

The tempter can never compel us to do evil. He cannot control minds unless they are yielded to his control. The will must consent, faith must let go its hold upon Christ, before Satan can exercise his power upon us. But every sinful desire we cherish affords him a foothold. Every

point in which we fail of meeting the divine standard is an open door by which he can enter to tempt and destroy us. D.A. 125.

... Israel ... had ever been the special objects of Satan's enmity; he was determined to cause their destruction. While they were obedient, he could do them no harm; therefore he had bent all his power and cunning to entice them into sin. Ensnared by his temptations, they had transgressed the law of God and *had been left* to become the prey of their enemies. P.K. 582.

Problem: Brightness of His Coming

Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. 2 Thes. 2:8.

Then shall they that obey not the gospel be consumed with the spirit of His mouth and be destroyed with the brightness of His coming.

G.C. 37.

A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: ... and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. Dan. 7:10.

Solution:

Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided, can make us meet [fit] to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. C.O.L. 311.

God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression; but He leaves the rejectors of His mercy to themselves, to reap that which they have sown. G.C. 36.

To sin, wherever found, "our God is a consuming fire." Heb. 12:29. In all who submit to His power the Spirit of God will consume sin. But if men cling to sin, they become identified with it. Then the glory of God, which destroys sin, must destroy them.

... Jacob had been guilty of a great sin in his conduct toward Esau; but he had repented. His transgressions had been forgiven, and his sin purged; therefore he could endure the revelation of God's presence. But

wherever men come before God while willfully cherishing evil, they were destroyed. At the second advent of Christ the wicked shall be consumed "with the Spirit of His mouth," and destroyed "with the brightness of His coming." The light of the glory [character] of God, which imparts life to the righteous, will slay the wicked. D.A. 107,108.

Like Israel of old the wicked destroy themselves; they fall by their iniquity. By a life of sin, they have placed themselves so out of harmony with God, their natures have become so debased with evil, that the manifestation of His glory is to them a consuming fire. G.C. 37.

Had His [the Father's] glory flashed forth from the cloud [at the cross], every human beholder would have been destroyed. D.A. 754.

By a life of rebellion, Satan and all who unite with him place themselves so out of harmony with God that His very presence is to them a consuming fire. The glory of Him who is love will destroy them. D.A. 764.

The light of His glory—His character—is to shine forth in His followers. C.O.L. 414.

What is this glory?—the character of God. T.M. 499.

The glory of Christ is His character, and His character is an expression of the law of God. 3 S.T. 258.

God's glory, His character, His merciful kindness and tender love—all that Moses had pleaded in behalf of Israel was to be revealed to all mankind. . . . As surely as God lives and reigns, His glory shall be declared "among the heathen, His wonders among all people." M.L.T. 288.

Christ in the flesh, condemning sin in the flesh, was a perfect revelation of God to the world. . . . The Lord Jesus is the embodiment of the glory of the Godhead. . . . 3 S.T. 259.

The glory of God is His character. . . . The glory of God—His character—was then revealed. . . . R.C. 214.

Oh, if we would by faith draw nigh to God, He would reveal to us His glory, which is His character. 6 B.C. 1097.

He who is to the transgressors of His law a devouring fire, is to His people a safe pavilion. G.C. 654.

While God is to the wicked a consuming fire, He is to His people both a sun and a shield. Rev. 20:6; Ps. 84:11; G.C. 673.

Problem: For Ever and Ever

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. Rev. 20:10.

And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.

Rev. 14:11.

And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. Rev. 19:3.

Solution:

The theory of eternal torment is one of the false doctrines that constitutes the wine of the abominations of Babylon, of which she makes all nations drink. G.C. 536.

An eternally burning hell preached from the pulpit, and kept before the people, does injustice to the benevolent character of God. I.T. 344.

Remorse for sin sometimes undermines the constitution and unbalances the mind. There are erroneous doctrines also, as that of an eternally burning hell and the endless torment of the wicked, that, by giving exaggerated and distorted views of the character of God, have produced the same result upon sensitive minds. S.T. 444.

No eternally burning hell will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin. S.R. 430.

It was Satan who originated the doctrine of eternal torment as a punishment for sin. F.E. 176.

Problem: God Does Not Always Forgive

Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him. Matt. 12:32.

Solution:

God works by the manifestation of His Spirit to reprove and convict the sinner; and if the Spirit's work is finally rejected, there is no more that God can do for the soul . . . The transgressor has cut himself off from God. D.A. 405.

Problem: God Brings Evil

Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house and will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor. . . For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. 2 Sam. 12:11,12.

Solution:

Not that God prompted these acts of wickedness, but because of David's sin He did not exercise His power to prevent them. P.P. 739.

Problem: God Cast Satan Out of Heaven

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: *he was cast out* into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Rev. 12:7-9.

Solution:

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but *left their own habitation*, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Jude 6.

And *his tail* drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did *cast them to the earth*. Rev. 12:4.

How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion [Israel] with a cloud in His anger, and cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel [Jerusalem], and remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger! Lamentations 2:1. (We see here God taking the blame for Israel's fall by Nebuchadnezzar. God claims to have "cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel." We know Israel was destroyed by Satan. "The horrible cruelties enacted in the destruction of Jerusalem are a demonstration of Satan's vindictive power over those who yield to his control." G.C. 35. God takes the responsibility for what He does not prevent.)

Problem: The Lord Sent Fiery Serpents

And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Numbers 21:6.

Solution:

To punish them for their ingratitude, and complaining against God, the Lord permitted fiery serpents to bite them . . . The Israelites, up to this time, had been preserved from these serpents in the wilderness, by a continual miracle; for the wilderness through which they traveled was infested with poisonous serpents. 1 BC 1116.

Problem: The Magicians Rods Became Serpents

Now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents. Ex. 7:11,12.

Solution:

The magicians seemed to perform several things with their enchantments similar to those things which God wrought by the hand of Moses and Aaron. They did not really cause their rods to become serpents, but by magic, aided by the great deceiver, made them appear like serpents, to counterfeit the work of God.

The statement that they did become serpents, simply means that they were such in appearance; such they were believed to be by Pharaoh and his court. There was nothing in their appearance to distinguish them from the serpent produced by Moses and Aaron, but while one was real, the others were spurious. And the Lord caused the living serpent to swallow up the pretended ones. ST 696.

Problem: God's Strange Work

As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: . . . for why will ye die, O house of Israel? Ez. 33:11.

Every century of profligacy has treasured up wrath against the day of wrath; and when the time comes, and the iniquity is full, then God will do His strange work. *2 S.M. 373.*

The work of destruction is a “strange work” to Him who is infinite in love. *P.P. 139.*

Solution:

Nothing occurs in the earth or heaven without the knowledge of the Creator. Nothing can happen without His permission. *4 R.H. 335.*

He lets them alone. *1 R.H. 43.*

He gives them up. *G.C. 517.*

He permits Satan to destroy. *6 T. 388.*

He removes His restraint. *G.C. 36.*

He does not interpose. *3 B.C. 1140.*

He withdraws His Spirit. *G.C. 614.*

He leaves them. *G.C. 230.*

He no longer shields. *4 R.H. 335.*

He no longer combats Satan in his efforts to destroy. *4 R.H. 335.*

He no longer interferes to prevent the destroyer. *4 R.H. 335.*

He removes His protecting care. *G.C. 589.*

God’s great and strange work is to redeem and save, and thus repair the ruin that sin has made. *3 R.H. 583.*

Compiler’s comment: God takes full responsibility for what He does not prevent—*BUT*

God destroys no one. *5 T. 120.*